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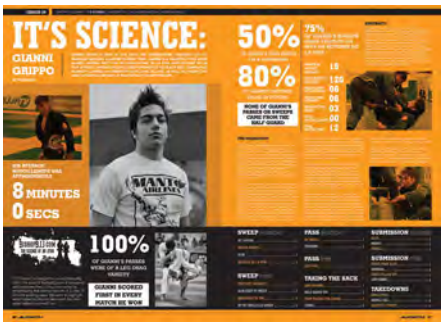

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The jiu jitsu purist

JIU JITSU STYLE

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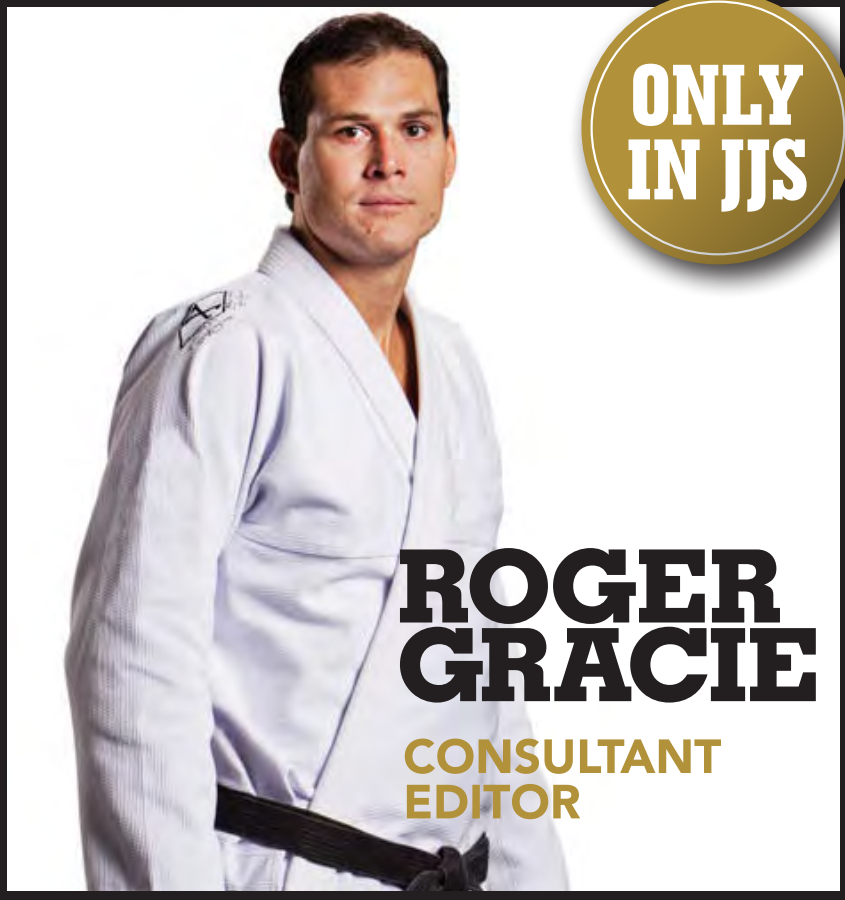


It's been a busy few months for me recently, travelling for seminars and teaching at various academies all over the world. It's also been a very exciting time for me as a fighter, as I've put pen to paper on a contract with One FC.

I still believe I have lots to offer as a fighter and there is definitely unfinished business for me in mixed martial arts. After losing my last fight in the UFC, I knew that I couldn't walk away from the sport on a low, so I am extremely happy to have this opportunity to get back into action and try to develop my skills in the cage.

Even though I am returning to MMA, we all know that my roots lie in jiu jitsu. I almost entered the World Championships this year even though I hadn't trained as much as I should have – that's how much I miss competing in the gi! Hopefully there will be some openings and opportunities for me to fight in jiu jitsu events over the coming year as well.

We are delighted to have Caio Terra as the cover star of our latest issue. As a bigger guy, I often wonder how my jiu jitsu would have developed if I was smaller and lighter. Though I'm sure Caio went through many hard times at the academy over the years, it's fair to say he hasn't let his size hinder his development and he's now one of the most technical black belts in the world. Make sure you check out this feature interview, as Caio addresses some very interesting topics.

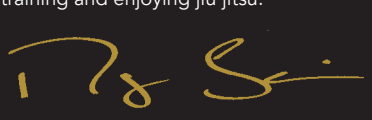
We also have another great column from Carlos Machado, a man with an amazing pedigree as a jiu jitsu fighter and teacher. As jiu jitsu continues to grow in popularity it's important to remember the basic principles we should all adhere to as martial artists, so make sure you read Carlos' thoughts on the subject.

Our Masterclass feature in this issue is a special one, as my friend Nino Schembri is showing some of his favourite techniques. Nino is known as being a fantastic guard player who was well ahead of his time. He was also part of the golden era at Gracie Barra, so you can be sure his techniques are tried and tested.

> "I STILL BELIEVE I HAVE LOTS TO OFFER AS A FIGHTER AND THERE IS DEFINITELY UNFINISHED BUSINESS FOR ME IN MIXED MARTIAL ARTS"

Finally, it was very interesting to watch the latest Metamoris event recently. The Metamoris team continues to put on exciting fights, and I think Josh Barnett's victory over Dean Lister probably turned a few heads. I look forward to seeing who they decide should challenge Barnett for his heavyweight title.

I hope you like the latest issue of the magazine and – until next time – keep training and enjoying jiu jitsu.



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The undefeated Rickson Gracie, photographed in Los Angles. Pick up the next issue of Jiu Jitsu Style to read our feature interview with Master Rickson.

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NEWSROOM

#RICKSONGRACIE #CHOKE #LEGEND #BJJMOVEMENT #BJJFEDERATION

RICKSON GRACIE STARTS NEW BJJ FEDERATION

Back in JJS#18, Rickson told us that he was developing a new federation, because "I feel like today there are so many flaws in the existing organisations involved with jiu jitsu, that jiu jitsu needs something more appropriate to reach the next level." That project has progressed considerably since November last year, as on the 20th July 2014, Rickson officially launched the Jiu Jitsu Global Federation.

This has without any doubt been the biggest news story in BJJ for a while. Partly that's down to the prospect of a new federation with ambitions to become a governing body. There's also the possibility of a modified rule set to "make a revolution", as Rickson put it to Tatame. However, above all of that, what has been most high profile is the fact that Rickson - up until now a somewhat distant figure with a carefully cultivated mythical aura - has suddenly become very accessible.

Rickson has appeared on every BJJ podcast of note and - most exciting of all - he has been willing to film instructional footage for the first time in recent memory (during episode 61 of Budo Jake's *This Week in BJJ*). If the JJGF project does nothing else, the possibility of more instructional videos from Rickson is a considerable benefit to the BJJ community.

On the *Joe Rogan Experience*, Rickson told the host that:

"The window of life is small, I don't have too much time. So I don't waste time doing what people expect from me, I try to do things that are really relevant to my soul. Like this Federation now...when I dream, I don't dream small. I dream the biggest dream I can dream. I see that level of need for the community, and the level of position I have to be the reference for that shift in the direction of our culture and our knowledge. I feel like I could not be more motivated, more happy, to engage on this."

His clear focus is bringing 'effectiveness' back to jiu jitsu, which Rickson claims has been 'diluted' in favour of an 'efficient' competition style playing to ever more specific rule sets. Like many others, Rickson wants to see competitors going for submissions, rather than today's increasingly advantage-orientated tournament circuit.

From a competition perspective, others have tried, such as Metamoris with its submission only marquee match-ups. As their submission only format still has a time limit, the results have been mixed. There have been exciting matches, but there have also been drawn-out crawls to the finish. US Grappling has offered true submission only with no time limits since 2008, but they have not (yet) had the exposure to secure big name match-ups.

Simply by having Rickson on-board, the Jiu Jitsu Global Federation is guaranteed to get attention. Their take on the rules is more conservative than might be expected, but two changes that should have immediate impact are a penalty for guard pulling (though it depends on context) and reaping the knee will be allowed at the 'elite' level.

Rickson insisted on his *Inside BJJ* interview that he did not want to "step on anybody's toes," but that he believes the JJGF tournaments will "bring a reference of what the best tournaments are supposed to be." This new federation's first official tournament will take place in Los Angeles, during October.

Beyond tournaments, Rickson told Eddie Goldman on *NHB News* that the JJGF also seeks to "validate all the professionals in the business" and "create a strategic unification for all the community." What Rickson refers to as 'education' is a large part of that, with certifications for instructors that will cover kids' classes, women's classes and self defence, as well as business guidance.

Rickson is a valuable figurehead for the JJGF, because he is one of the few figures in BJJ who has universal respect. A lot will depend on the ability of the people behind the JJGF, dealing with day-to-day operations. The big question is whether the JJGF becomes a genuine alternative to private companies like the IBJJF, or if it simply fizzles out like so many other attempts at BJJ federations have in the past.

JIU JITSU GLOBAL FEDERATION

#GRACIEBREAKDOWN #GRACIEBROS #RENERKNOWSBEST

CONTROVERSY OVER 'CHOKEHOLD DEATH'

Mainstream news outlets reported on the sad death of Eric Garner in July, who leaves behind six children. During Garner's efforts to resist arrest (he was 6'3" and roughly 350lbs) in New York, an officer briefly used a neck restraint. Garner passed away in an ambulance on his way to the hospital. As a result, the incident was reported as a death from a chokehold, when in fact the cause of death was a heart attack a considerable time after the restraint was applied.

Accusations have been made against the police that the arrest (the allegation is that Garner was selling untaxed cigarettes) was unjustified and over-zealous. Officer Daniel Pantaleo has lost his badge over the incident. The particular restraint he used was, according to mainstream news reports, illegal. Another officer was also put on desk duty, while four of the emergency workers who responded to the incident also face an investigation.

Responding to this tragedy, the Gracie Academy put out a video discussing the situation from a jiu jitsu perspective. They stated that:

"As professional martial arts instructors specialising in a martial art that is heavily based on submission holds, many of which are based on attacking the neck, vascular neck restraints [...] as specialists each with over twenty years in this art, we do feel we have an opinion that matters. [...] We're here to say that, based on twenty years of experience as professional jiu jitsu instructors and defensive tactics instructors, we don't believe that the choke is what directly caused Eric Garner's death."

Rener Gracie pointed out that the autopsy revealed there wasn't any damage to Garner's throat that would have restricted his breathing, suggesting that it is more likely the stress of the situation coupled with Garner's asthma had a greater impact.

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RESULTS

ED INGAMELLS VS CHRIS REGAN
– Fight to a draw

DAVID MORCEGAO VS MATTHEW STALONE CALAGHAN
– Dave Morcegao wins via leglock

SHAUN MATTHEWS VS ALAIN POZO
– Fight to a draw

BRADLEY HILL VS JACK LISTER
– Bradley Hill wins via footlock

ROSS NICHOLLS VS ADAM ADSHEAD
– Ross Nicholls wins via armlock

FFION DAVIES VS SOPHIE WALTERS
– Ffion Davies wins via armlock

JACKIE WOOD VS MELANIE CADWALLADER
– Fight to a draw

SEAN MCDONAGH VS PETER YOUDS
– Sean McDonagh wins via head and arm choke

RICKY BEADNALL VS SHAUN SMITH
- Ricky Beadnall wins via triangle choke

JAMES NARDONE VS DAVID HULLAND
– Fight to a draw

SHANE PRICE VS LUKE HORTON
– Shane Price wins via armlock

CHRIS NAISBETT VS ANDREW BELL
– Fight to a draw

MAHLI HARDIP VS MATT LAVERICK
- Mahli Hardip wins via choke

PHIL DE FRIES VS PAUL WHYMAN
- Phil De Fries wins via kimura

PERRY GOODWIN VS THOMAS SYMON
- Perry Goodwin wins via kimura

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European Champion 2013

Sam Gibson (Black Elite)
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European Nogi Champion 2013

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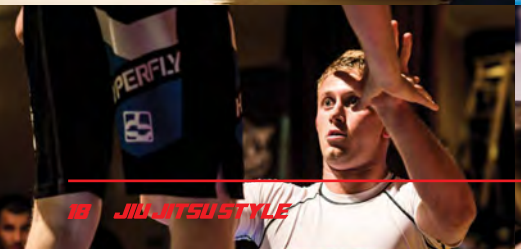

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Following Royce Gracie's first steps inside the Ultimate Fighting Championship, people everywhere started searching out this enchanting new style of grappling. In the wake of Royce's endeavours Gameness was formed – a brand born on the mat, providing jiu jitsu products for people who train.

Entering the market in 1998, Gameness is a company with unrivalled heritage in the jiu jitsu industry. With over 15 years of experience developing products, supporting athletes and working within the community, Gameness are long-time stalwart supporters of Brazilian jiu jitsu.

"We have been working in the industry for such a long time now, so I think we have a really good understanding of what people are looking for when they invest their hard earned cash on jiu jitsu products," says Kris Horner, Gameness CEO. "Quality has to be a top priority and we do take pride in how much we invest in this area; some of our products go under years of testing before we send them to the marketplace. Our main goal is to make the process of getting top quality, innovative and fashionable training apparel as easy as possible."

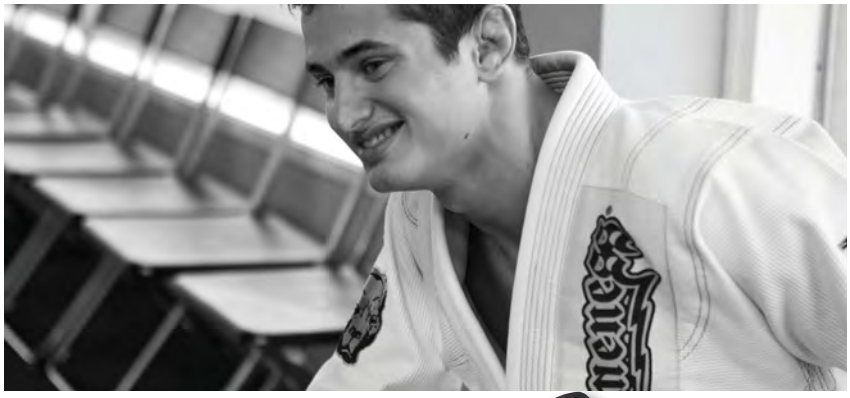
Having long established their brand ethos in the USA, it seems Gameness' next frontier on the map is Europe. Though their products have been available in the EU for some time, they've not always been readily accessible, or offered at a competitive price.

With their European distribution now set to operate out of the United Kingdom, Gameness fans can look forward to getting hold of all the latest products more easily, more speedily and at a better price.

Steve Hewitt, former European Commercial Director at the Reebok Group and now Director of Gameness EU, was quick to stress their emphasis on customer service.

"It's extremely important that our products are as accessible as possible. It's what buyers expect, and rightly so. To achieve that we've significantly ramped up our investment in

"THEIR PRODUCTS ARE THE BEST I'VE EVER USED AND IT'S A PLEASURE TO BE PART OF THEIR TEAM" - CAIO TERRA



inventory for European distributors and customers and that will enable us to offer a world-class service. We want our products to be in stock 24/7, so no frustrating delays or periods where you can't get hold of what you want. Customers also want a quick turnaround; we appreciate that too, so orders will be fulfilled within a 24 to 48 hour time frame."

A key ingredient of the Gameness re-launch is improved pricing that allows the brand to be more accessible to BJJ players throughout Europe.

"We were determined to get some even parity and consistency with our brand pricing across the globe" Steve explains. "It just didn't make sense to us that we sat at one price point in the US and another in Europe. Again, there's been significant investment our end to address this issue.

"It's essentially a European re-launch, combining world class distribution and customer service together with a much improved pricing structure. In making these positive changes, we're confident that our European fans will now have access to the same Gameness experience that we offer in the USA."

And let's not forget, Gameness is a brand that has long been a favourite amongst the jiu jitsu elite. Having supported a number of high profile athletes over the years, including the likes of the legendary Mario Sperry and Gracie Barra's Kayron Gracie, Gameness' current Pro Team is awash with top talent.

The crowning jewel in Gameness' crown is 8-time world champion, Caio Terra, known as one of the most technical fighters on the planet. Caio's trademark slogan, "Technique Conquers All", is homage to his emphasis on jiu jitsu, not strength or power, and in keeping with the roots of the sport as outlined by Carlos and Helio Gracie.

"Gameness have been a huge support for me and my jiu jitsu career," says Caio. "Their products are the best I've ever used and it's a pleasure to be part of their team. I am also really happy that I now have my own signature Gameness gi – it's awesome!"

The hugely talented Yuri Simoes is the most recent recruit to the Gameness Pro Team, with the young black belt taking bronze at the IBJJF World Championships and silver at the IBJJF European Championships this year.

Gameness' official European re-launch is set for October 2014, so make sure you keep up to date with all the latest developments via social networks.

Facebook.com/gamenesseu
Twitter.com/gamenesseu

The Gameness EU website will re-launch in October 2014.

www.gamenesseurope.com

GAMENESS AIR KIMONO

As you'd expect, Gameness' primary focus is on kimonos, offering a wide range of products across the pricing spectrum. The 2014 Gameness 'AIR' is one of the most popular kimonos within the range due to its high quality build, its lightness and fantastic pricing. Available in white, blue and black.

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BLACK £79.99

EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTOR PROGRAM

Gameness Europe are introducing their 'exclusive distribution program' ahead of their re-launch this coming October. If you are interested in distributing Gameness exclusively within your region, please email info@gamenesseurope.com.

"Because of the significant investment we've made with our inventory, we are able to offer distributors new pricing on our range of products," says Steve Hewitt, Gameness Europe Director. "Most importantly, our business model means we will never be out of stock with our core products, so we urge anyone keen to start an exclusive distribution in their area to get in touch."

BELT PROMOTIONS

IF YOU WERE LUCKY ENOUGH TO BE AWARDED A NEW BELT RECENTLY, THIS PAGE REPRESENTS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO SAVOUR THE MOMENT WITH RECOGNITION IN JIU JITSU STYLE! SEND IN DETAILS OF YOUR RECENT PROMOTION, INCLUDING THE RANK YOU ACHIEVED AND YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S NAME, AND WE WILL PUBLISH AS MANY AS WE CAN IN OUR MAGAZINE.

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Gael "Fox" Coadic was graded black belt 2nd degree by Master Mauricio Robbe de Almeida.

Jonathan Florendo was recently promoted to blue belt under Prof. Gustavo Enriquez from Infinite Jiu Jitsu in Rocklin, California.

Mark Nixon promoted to brown belt and Glenn Ward promoted to purple belt by professor Eduardo Goncalves.

Joanna Kruszyk and Raymon Sanchez received blue belts from Professor Gabriel Kitober and Professor Nicolai Holt at Gracie Barra Bristol.

Christopher Martins, AJ Sousa, Rob McCausland and Daniel Roman all promoted to black belt by Pablo Popovitch.

Purple Belts - Rouven Buchtala, Felix Grave, Christian Marusczyk, Björn Walker, Blue Belts - Julius Hausmann, Moritz Barta Bohm all promoted by Nick Brooks.

Randy Kirby and Kenny Gober promoted to purple belt under Warren Grace of Guardian MMA in Lebanon, Tennessee.

Carl Gerrard of Lakes BJJ being promoted to blue belt by Professor 'Leão Marinho' Paul Hartley.

Mike Partridge was promoted to purple belt under Andy Roberts BJJ in Farnborough.

Dan Strauss promoted to black belt by Roger Gracie.

Mike Bidwell was promoted to black belt by Phil Migliarese and Ken Kronenberg from Team Tai-Kai/Balance after 18 years of training!

From left to right: Roz Wei, Hector Wong, Bergen Vermette and Joe Parente all promoted to purple belt under Walter Buse from East Van BJJ in Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Robert Drysdale promoted Mihail Kunchev, Nikolai Tsokov and Konstantin Mavrodiev to blue belt at Zenith BJJ Bulgaria in Sozopolis, Bulgaria.

Leigh Collier was promoted to blue belt by his instructor and friend Ashley Williams, training at the Chris Rees Academy in South Wales.

John Burke was recently promoted to blue belt under Royce Gracie at Força Combat Academy.

Kevin Riley was promoted to purple belt under Checkmat black belt & head coach at South Shields Fight Factory, Scott Ramsay.

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR
ENTER THE NOGI

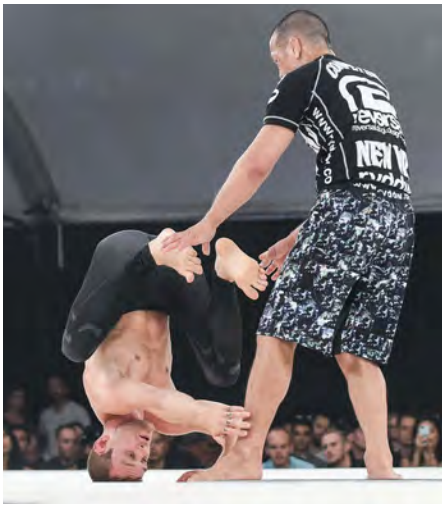
So, who trains nogi regularly? In all honesty, it's never really been an area of jiu jitsu that has captivated me like gi training. Don't get me wrong, I love watching high-paced nogi matches as much as the next jiu jitsu fan, but it has never compelled me to drop the kimono and rock the spats - until now. Maybe...

I found it interesting that five of the six matches at Metamoris 4 were nogi encounters. This was probably just a coincidence, with the likes of Josh Barnett, Chael Sonnen and even Baret Yoshida all much more happy giving the gi a miss. Intentional or not, slick displays from the likes of Garry Tonon and Andre Galvao (paired with the looming excitement of the IBJJF Nogi Worlds) roused my nogi interest.

From a development perspective, I've never really worried about the lack of nogi within my schedule. Training at Roger Gracie's academy in London, I have got used to working with the one solitary Friday nogi session which I pretty much never attend. Roger's nogi pedigree is unquestionable, so I always felt if one session a week was good enough for him, it's good enough for me.

Then of course you have the other end of the spectrum at an academy like Marcelo Garcia's in New York, where training is divided pretty evenly between gi and nogi. Paired with our latest cover star Caio Terra's words on nogi training developing his gi game, I decided it may be time to rethink my outlook on training without the gi.

After just one session grappling with high-level nogi fighters, I felt like a huge void had been identified within my jiu jitsu. Suddenly my 'A-game' guard attacks were useless due to the lack of grips, I was getting choked from pretty much every angle and my own attempts at guillotining my sparring partners were as sloppy as a white belt's first armbar.



With that said, my lack of skill as a nogi fighter fills me with a real sense of excitement, because it represents a whole new area of training to explore and develop from a pretty mediocre level. Suddenly I have become interested in learning how to wrestle, how to perform a decent D'arce choke and even how to refine my gi techniques so that they translate into nogi. I've well and truly opened Pandora's box. Though many of you reading this will have taken the plunge into nogi much earlier in your training than I, and are probably laughing your ass off right now, I highly recommend anyone who hasn't yet given it a good crack to work in a session or two a week.

In other news, I recently attended Caio Terra's training camp in Turkey and it was a hugely gratifying experience. Learning from the likes of Caio Terra, Yuri Simoes and Kit Dale at the beautiful Spice Hotel was just amazing. Thanks to the organiser Ozan Ickale for putting on a great camp, and I highly recommend you check it out next year!

Callum

CALLUM MEDCRAFT

MENDES BROS

SHOYOROLL

IT'S SCIENCE:

GIANNI GRIPPO

BY TYLER BISHOP

GIANNI GRIPPO IS ONE OF THE USA'S TOP COMPETITORS, FIGHTING OUT OF MARCELO GARCIA'S ACADEMY IN NEW YORK. GIANNI IS A MASTER OF THE OPEN GUARD, KNOWN BEST FOR HIS DEVASTATING DE LA RIVA AND REVERSE DE LA RIVA ATTACKS. HAVING RECENTLY BEEN PROMOTED TO BLACK BELT, GIANNI HAS ALREADY CLAIMED A NUMBER OF ELITE LEVEL SCALPS, AS WELL AS FACING THE LIKES OF RAFAEL MENDES AT MAJOR IBJJF CHAMPIONSHIPS.

HIS AVERAGE MATCH LENGTH WAS APPROXIMATELY

8 MINUTES 0 SECS

BISHOPBJJ.COM
THE SCIENCE OF JIU JITSU

'It's Science' is brought to you by BishopBjj.com. The goal of BishopBjj.com is to expand and empower the jiu jitsu community by emphasising the science and art of jiu jitsu in fun and exciting ways. We want to highlight what makes jiu jitsu so calculated, but also what makes it so much fun.

100%

OF GIANNI'S PASSES WERE OF A LEG DRAG VARIETY

GIANNI SCORED FIRST IN EVERY MATCH HE WON

50%

OF GIANNI'S WINS ENDED VIA A SUBMISSION

80%

OF GIANNI'S MATCHES ENDED IN VICTORY

NONE OF GIANNI'S PASSES OR SWEEPS CAME FROM THE HALF GUARD

75%

OF GIANNI'S SWEEPS CAME FROM DE LA RIVA OR REVERSE DE LA RIVA

NUMBER OF MATCHES OBSERVED	15
TOTAL MINUTES OBSERVED	120
MATCHES WON BY SUBMISSION	06
MATCHES WON BY POINTS	06
OPPONENT WON MATCH	03
TOTAL MATCHES DRAWN	00
TOTAL MATCHES WON	12

ABSTRACT:

All matches observed of Gianni Grippo used in this small sample occurred at IBJJF events, inside his weight division, and in the years 2012-2014. Only techniques, occurrences, and outcomes that were recorded are displayed in the data below (i.e. if no butterfly sweeps occurred, there will not be a representation of that in the sample data charts). Matches were selected at random based on freely available matches online – selected using a random generator from 20 total IBJJF matches that occurred in the study timeline. This is a limited sample, but given the estimated amount of matches in this time period it is well above the percentage necessary to create a scientifically validated trend sampling.

THE BREAKDOWN

Gianni Grippo is the youngest competitor we have ever studied. In fact, he has been a black belt competitor for only 1 year so far. It's a credit to his diligence as a competitor that there is actually a large enough sample to conduct a breakdown. With that in mind, Gianni already displays the characteristics we tend to see in all of our top-competitor breakdowns. Grippo has an incredibly defined tournament strategy and game plan. This leads to a high winning percentage (80%), and a strong submission percentage (50%).

Gianni is well known for his de la Riva and reverse de la Riva guard game. It's easy to see why this happens to be the case. This is the foundation that Grippo's primary strategy is built around. 75% of all of his sweeps that we recorded occurred from DLR or RDLR guard, and he uses these sweeps and attacks to set up his passing and submission techniques. In fact, you could argue that the broadest approach Grippo takes is from the guard. In our study Grippo used 4 different sweeping positions and 4 different sweep types to attack his opponent from the bottom. As the game further unfolds, Grippo becomes more and more defined in his approach. The only type of pass we recorded Gianni executing in the study was a leg drag pass. What's more, this leg drag passing strategy led to two separate roads to the back. These roads included a back take from the pass itself, or a back take from an attempted escape once he was able to establish side-control.

Grippo's submission game was even more defined. The only submissions we recorded during the study were chokes from the back. Upon reflection, it becomes clear that Gianni Grippo has become an expert in walking each of his opponents into a very familiar fate. He has one of the most defined strategies of any competitor we've studied and it all starts from the DLR or RDLR guard.

Taking everything into account, it is obvious that Grippo's end-game involves the back, and he reverse engineers it from his strongest and most diversified position, open guard. The only downside to having such a defined game is that it paints a very clear picture to opponents as to what your comfort zone is. However, Gianni seems to understand this. Recently, in a post on his brand new blog, GianniGrippo.com, he talks about how he is evolving his game at Marcelo's academy and striving to further enhance his game plan in light of competitors understanding his strategy in greater detail.

Again we see the importance of having a defined game plan and strategy. The most impressive part about Grippo may be his youth, and relative inexperience. The future looks bright if Gianni Grippo can continue to build on his early career successes.

SWEEP (POSITION)

DE LA RIVA	5
SPIDER SWEEPS	1
50/50	1
REVERSE DE LA RIVA	4

SWEEP (TYPE)

TRIPS/OFF BALANCE	1
50/50 USED TO SWEEP	1
BERIMBOLO TO TOP	6
SIT UP, SINGLE LEG SWEEP	3

PASS (POSITION)

ON KNEES	2
STANDING	3

PASS (TYPE)

LEG DRAG	5

TAKING THE BACK

SIDE CONTROL	1
HALF GUARD TOP	1
FROM PASSING THE GUARD	3
GUARD	2

SUBMISSION (POSITION)

BACK	6
MOUNT	0
TURTLE	0

SUBMISSION (TYPE)

CHOKE FROM BACK	6
ARMBAR	0
CROSS COLLAR TOP	0
LOOP CHOKE	0

TAKEDOWNS

ANKLE PICK	0
DOUBLE LEG	0
SACRIFICE THROW	0

HISTORY 101

YAMASAKI TEAM

The Yamasaki family has a long tradition of martial arts. Seiti Yamasaki brought up his family in Brazil, teaching his sons Shigeru and Shigueto. Following that introduction from their father, they would move to Sao Paulo and become students of Ryuzo Ogawa. According to grappling.com (the Yamasaki Academy website), Ogawa had started a school with Mitsuyo Maeda in 1938. By the early 1950s and with well over a decade of martial arts behind them, the Yamasaki brothers felt ready to open their own school.

At that time, the art they had learned and later taught was judo. Both the brothers would attain a high rank in that style. Another family in Brazil had learned and taught judo for several decades, but they had changed the name: over in Rio, the Gracie family referred to their style as jiu jitsu.

By the 1960s, the line between the Yamasaki brothers' judo and the growth of jiu jitsu espoused by the Gracie family (along with a few others, such as Oswaldo Fadda) was becoming blurred. Though Shigeru and Shigueto taught judo, the sons of Shigeru would teach Brazilian jiu jitsu.

Born in 1966, Shigueto's son was an accomplished judoka. Shigueto Jr represented Brazil in judo at the 1992 Olympics, an event at which his uncle was a referee. Shigeru's eldest son Mario Yamasaki was born a little earlier than Shigueto Jr, entering the world in Sao Paulo in 1964. Just like Shigeru himself, Mario began training under his father. Having first got on the mats at three years old, Mario and his younger brother Fernando (born in 1967) got their judo black belts at the age of sixteen.

Fernando won his first state title in judo in 1979, before becoming a black belt in 1983. Eager to expand his horizons, a couple of years later Fernando started wrestling Freestyle and Greco-Roman, a sport in which he had considerable talent. Fernando was soon winning state and national championships, then like his cousin Shigueto Jr, he became an Olympian. Grappling.com states that Fernando qualified for three Olympic Games, before retiring from the national team in 1997.

Fernando initiated his BJJ training in the early 1980s. He began with Otavio Almeida on an intermittent basis, having been introduced by his friend Cassio Marcelo. His dedication to jiu jitsu increased after meeting Marcelo Behring in the mid-1980s. Shigeru's youngest son went on to earn a black belt under Behring in 1989.

That same year, he moved to the US. At that time, jiu jitsu was thin on the ground, so Fernando ended up training in judo at Georgetown University: continuing his success in that sport, he won multiple titles. After returning to Brazil around a year later, Behring had a surprise for his old student, demoting him back to brown belt.

Rather than taking this as an affront,

Fernando simply kept training, re-earning his black belt in 1991. As he explained to BJJScandinavia.com:

"When I went back to Brazil, Marcelo told me to go back to the brown belt because my technique was not there. Next day I bought a brown belt and I had to wear it for a couple of months. I know for some people it sounds like humiliation but that made me more focused, hungry to learn, to win more tournaments and to prove to him that my loyalty was not on my belt!"

Mario Yamasaki brought his family's take on Brazilian Jiu Jitsu to the USA in 1994, a year after the first Ultimate Fighting Championship. The Yamasaki Academy was founded in Rockville, Maryland. Back in Brazil, Fernando was part of the first Mundials in 1996, bringing in three international competitors.

Eugenio Fuestes Estrada from Cuba had been Fernando's wrestling coach. Remco Pardoel from Holland had originally met Yamasaki due to their mutual involvement in the JJIF (Ju Jitsu International Federation). An experienced martial artist, in 1994 Pardoel had yet to begin his journey in BJJ: since then, he has earned his black belt. Fernando's trio was rounded off by Hiroki Baba from Japan, who had visited Sao Paulo in September 1995 to train BJJ. Today, he runs the Hiro BJJ Academy in Yokohama and holds a black belt under Oswaldo Alves.

Fernando had known Pardoel for several years by that point, the Dutchman visiting Fernando in Sao Paulo back in 1994 before his UFC 2 appearance. The Yamasaki brothers became an integral part of bringing the UFC to Brazil in the late '90s, when it was still under the ownership of Robert Meyrowitz at SEG. Both brothers were also referees at the 1997 event, but while Fernando did not seek to continue his career with that organisation, Mario has since become famous for his UFC officiating duties.

By 2003, younger brother Fernando had joined Mario in the States. Mario's Yamasaki Academy became a partnership between the two Yamasaki brothers and one of Fernando's students, Francisco Neto. Mario returned to Brazil in February 2011 to help further spread mixed martial arts, leaving the business in the hands of his brother and Neto.

The Yamasaki academy is one of the oldest in the United States, starting off a network of schools that has its stronghold in Maryland, with a powerful presence in DC and Virginia. The Yamasaki flag also flies in the Dominican Republic, Brazil and Sweden. Given their long years in the USA, the Yamasaki brothers have produced numerous notable students.

For example, JJS#6 interviewee Dave 'The Rock' Jacobs started his training at their school in February 1998, earning his black belt in May 2005. He currently runs his own eponymous location in Vienna, VA. Founder of The Green Gi (a company specialising in hemp kimonos), Adrienne Adams, came up under Jacobs and won the blue belt title in her middleweight women's division at the 2009 Mundials. More success is sure to follow: perhaps a third set of Yamasaki brothers will make their mark on jiu jitsu in the coming years.

SOURCES: CARLOS GRACIE: *O CRIADOR DE UMA DINASTIA*, REILA GRACIE (RIO DE JANEIRO; SAO PAULO: EDITORA RECORD, 2011 [3RD EDITION]) • GRAPPLING.COM • SUBMISSIONCONTROL.COM • BJJHEROES.COM • *JIU JITSU STYLE* ISSUE 6 • THEROCKBJJ.COM • DANIEL LAENDER INTERVIEW WITH FERNANDO YAMASAKI (2012) • BJJSCANDINAVIA.COM

GREG CREEL

ABERTILLERY'S GREG CREEL IS A FAMILIAR FACE ON THE UK JIU JITSU CIRCUIT. HAVING RECEIVED HIS BLACK BELT IN DECEMBER 2012, THEN SECURING A BRONZE AT THE EUROPEANS IN 2014, HE HAS GONE ON TO ESTABLISH HIMSELF AS ARGUABLY THE BEST GRAPPLING TALENT TO COME OUT OF HIS COUNTRY TO DATE, AS WELL AS BEING A KEY COMPONENT IN THE HISTORY OF WELSH JIU JITSU. WE TALKED TO GREG ABOUT HIS LIFE THROUGH BJJ.

Hi Greg. You're a Pedro Bessa black belt who teaches and competes out of Celtic Pride Martial Arts, but how did you get there?

Well I've played rugby my whole life up until I dislocated my kneecaps at 17. I had to stop, then made my return only to dislocate one again and then quit. I was looking for something different to do until an old friend introduced me to traditional jiu jitsu; they catered more for the ground-side of it, so I'd train with him on a Saturday, going down just for a roll and not having a clue what it was. I remember I walked in having never been to a dojo in my life – ever. No karate, no judo, no martial arts. I just rocked up one Saturday morning and that was the end really, or beginning, should I say.

So how did the link with Pedro Bessa come about?

I started training as a white belt at Gracie Barra Swansea for about six months. When I started, around about 2004, there weren't many clubs where I was, or even Wales, so I had to travel to Swansea. I would travel and train two to three times a week.

Around about then Carlos Lemos opened a place in Bristol, which was the same distance from me, around 100 miles there and back. A friend and I decided to go there to train with a black belt. Things didn't really work out, we just wanted to fight and train but sometimes you would turn up and it would be self-defence. That's not really what we wanted to do, we wanted to compete, so we switched to Pedro's as blue belts. It wasn't too long after I started (jiu jitsu) as I got to blue belt quite quickly and it went from there.

Now you've been with Pedro ever since, and in December 2012 you stood alongside Kevin Cox and Mark Tucker and he made you one of his first black belts. How was that?

It was amazing! To be honest, it was always one of my goals, not just to be a black belt, but to be one of the first in Wales. Wales is quite a small jiu jitsu community; it was a goal of mine to catapult myself to train as hard as I could and get a black belt; not as quickly as I could, I didn't want to be that person, but I always had that hunger to get it. To be one of his first was brilliant.

It came as a surprise though to be honest. At brown belt I didn't compete as much as I should through injuries, I have a young family, I work full-time and sometimes life gets on top of you. I wanted that competition experience more, but it was amazing and a massive surprise. Kev and me have been through a lot together too. When he came to Pedro's we went from purple, brown then black together after sharing a lot of blood, sweat and tears. We have quite a close relationship and it was amazing to do that together.

You've spoken of your delight at becoming one of Wales' first black belts and you've also spoken in interviews of your excitement at the expansion of UK BJJ. We're now seeing that expansion reach Wales that bit more with the likes of you, Ross Nicholls, Jamie Hughes at purple belt (a student of Greg) and many more. Welsh jiu jitsu is on the rise, isn't it?

Yeah! It was just a matter of time too - where we're from there's not much else to do. You get given a rugby ball or a football, otherwise there's literally nothing else to do. You see a lot of young guys fall off the track a little bit, whether it's drinking or drugs, they do their thing because that's the area we live in.

When you see guys starting jiu jitsu and getting into it, you see the change. You see them say, 'Man, I could really be good at this', it happens with a lot of guys in Wales as there is nothing to do. There are distractions in cities, but here? Nothing. Guys come home from work, they see their families and then they come to training. There aren't many distractions around here apart from drink and drugs, that's about it.

We've seen you on the competition mats, what philosophy do you take with your students if they have those distractions around? Do you push them to immerse themselves, or do you let them find their feet on their own?

I'm not a pushy kind of coach, if they want to compete, they can. For me, competing is not a goal, it's something I do because I enjoy it. I want my guys to see me compete, see that it's something I enjoy doing and that it's something they may enjoy too. If there are competitions coming up, I let them know and they will let me know if they want to and I'll help them out.

I don't really push them. Me and Jamie (Hughes) are the most competitive in our club, we have white and blue belts who compete a few times a year but I find if you push somebody to do something and they don't perform it can cause a distraction. I want my students to come and enjoy what we do. They could be amazing in training but competing is different, I want them to do it in their own time and to enjoy it.

Welsh jiu jitsu is still relatively young. I wanted to ask you to now look back at the white belt you were at GB Swansea and to then flash forward to, say, your last competition with your team behind you. You've experienced that expansion first hand, achieved your goals and now you have guys who look up to you as inspiration. How does that feel?

It's brilliant. Coaching was never really one of my goals, I just wanted to compete and enjoy myself. It's something I was asked to do and stumbled upon so I gave that a go like I would anything else. When I found it though, I thought this could be something I could be good at. The lifestyle, nothing is forced, you train when you want to, you have a good laugh with your friends. Meeting people has been the best part; some of my best friends are in jiu jitsu now.

When I look behind me and I've got not just my students, but Pedro and some of my best friends there at competition, it's amazing. It's a good feeling and to see it come this far in Wales is brilliant.

Perhaps when you say there is nothing else to do in Wales, does that make the potential limitless?

Absolutely. When I started, I literally started training in a pub – that's the nature we come from. We didn't have the facilities to open up an academy, there are no industrial units we can turn into a school, we had to work literally from the ground up.

Training in the pub wasn't the best way to get guys through the door but it was something we had to do. The landlord even ended up buying us the mats to train. We turned up to train and went from there and that's the same for many Welsh clubs. We go from real, raw, grass roots to full time academies. That shows you how interested Welsh people are in this but getting them here is the most difficult part.

So, you've gone from training in a pub to fighting Jack Magee at 08/20. Obviously, it's a big change to now find yourself on the national stage – What are your thoughts on the submission only format?

Early in my career, from white up to around brown belt I would submit a guy or get submitted myself – that was the type of guy I was, that's how I used to fight. It was only when I got to black belt that I realised I had to change. So, it works for me, I enjoy trying to submit people, it's natural to me.

I really like to open my jiu jitsu up and express myself. You have to be a little more clinical at black belt so for me, it's come at the perfect time. It's all very interesting and it's going to be really good for UK jiu jitsu. As a small community, everybody knows everybody so to it's great to see these guys get the recognition they deserve. Subf15teen, TUFF, 08/20, there's going to be more too.

As a self-admitted submission hunter, do you think it allows scope for much more expressive jiu jitsu?

Yeah, I do. I think at black belt margins are really small, with just a couple of points on an opponent you start to close the fight a little bit. At that level you can't afford to make a mistake and that is something I'm used to now - it's something you have to get used to. But now, you have no choice, you go for it or you don't win. There's no resting, no points, you either win or you don't - you have to try and submit the guy.

I think you'll see a lot more guys express themselves. Everyone wants that highlight finish and I think that we will see a lot of guys submitting each other in the best way possible which can happen at any point. I also think it keeps the crowd interested; they have to watch as it could happen at any moment in the fight.

"WHEN I STARTED, I LITERALLY STARTED TRAINING IN A PUB – THAT'S THE NATURE WE COME FROM"

FRONTLINE
ACADEMY

EDUARDO "TETA" RIOS

AS A BLACK BELT UNDER RICARDO LIBORIO AND HAVING TRAINED AT THE FAMOUS CARLSON GRACIE ACADEMY IN RIO DE JANEIRO, EDUARDO "TETA" RIOS IS A JIU JITSU FIGHTER OF SOME PEDIGREE. HAVING EMIGRATED FROM HIS NATIVE BRAZIL TO NORWAY IN 2006, TETA HAS SEEN THE EUROPEAN JIU JITSU SCENE GROW FIRST HAND. WE CAUGHT UP WITH THE FRONT LINE ACADEMY REPRESENTATIVE TO TALK ABOUT HIS TIME AT THE CARLSON GRACIE ACADEMY, FIGHTING HIS HEROES AND HIS NEW LIFE IN EUROPE.

Hey Eduardo, so tell us about where you grew up and how that led to you starting jiu jitsu.

I grew up in Barra de Tijuca, so I grew up in Rio with all the Gracie family and Gracie Barra team there. Plus my uncle used to train at Gracie Barra. When I was younger you would always hear about the Gracie family, in fact my grandfather was a big fan of Helio Gracie and used to go and watch his fights.

I grew up like, three blocks from Robson Gracie's house, and I grew up hearing about the family and hearing about jiu jitsu from my uncle. I started judo when I was young, but it was my grandfather that said I should stop judo and start jiu jitsu. I first started the summer courses at Gracie Barra with Ze Beleza and then I trained with Tolita 'Pitoco' Jordan. We were all from the same neighbourhood, so we used to train together and surf together.

When I was about 14 or 15 years old I met Ricardo Liborio. Of course, I liked training with the guys before a lot, but I think when I met Liborio that is when my passion for jiu jitsu really took over.

So what was it like training with Ricardo at the Carlson Gracie Academy back then?

The sparring there was pretty intense, but everyone went about training with a big smile man. As a kid, watching all these champions training together and training hard was amazing. The team spirit that they had to defend the Carlson Gracie flag and the Carlson Gracie name was a big inspiration for me. Just for me to be able to hang out there, maybe spar a bit between rounds or just because Ricardo was bringing me there, I know that was a great experience.

People often talk about the amazing golden eras at academies, such as Carlson Gracie Academy before the famous split. Did you realise at the time it was a special environment?

Especially nowadays I realise even more that I was lucky to have witnessed it. It's funny when you hear people talking about specific stories from the past and I can say that I was actually there; I saw it and I lived it.

You've made lots of friends though jiu jitsu and travel a lot. Do you think it's important that people from different teams can hang out and train together sometimes?

I guess I can compare it to my surfing a little bit. For me, surfing is about having fun, getting better and travelling to new places and making new friends. For a long time I've been able to do this with BJJ as well. I've got to travel and meet new people, but also to compete with them and to learn to respect everyone. I think this is something that I have got from Liborio.

I love the idea of training with everyone and exchanging knowledge, but I think it's also important to keep the balance and I know that I have to keep a keen eye on my own team. I guess as a guy who has been around the scene for a while now it gives me a little bit more flexibility.

You mentioned that you've been around jiu jitsu for quite a long time now, so what would you say are some of the most notable changes you've witnessed?

I think competition has always been evolving and will continue to evolve – it's just a process. As soon as you see people using modern, crazy guards, sooner or later you will see people coming up with crazy guard passes – I think that's just the game, you know?

You have had a wide spanning competition career yourself! Can you talk us through some of your highlights?

I was quite successful at the lower belts, so when I got to black belt it felt like my whole world was changing - it was just completely different. All of a sudden I went from fighting brown belt to fighting guys like Terere or Nino Schembri. It was just so amazing for me to get to black belt, but everything started again for me at that stage. Stepping on the mat and being able to compete against the greats was a great feeling.

I got some good results in Brazil, but when I moved to Norway I was able to compete more and get some good results. I won the European Championships with the gi and have won the European Nogi Championships three times. I have won the ADCC European trials twice. I think this has really helped to build up my name here in Europe and I am proud of that accomplishment.

"OF COURSE THE GUYS AT CARLSON GRACIE ACADEMY WERE ALL BIG CHARACTERS, AND WALLID ISMAIL WAS OBVIOUSLY A HUGE CHARACTER – HE'S A VERY FUNNY GUY"

So did you ever think you would end up living and teaching in Norway?

No, not really (laughs). It's a funny story, because when (Ricardo) Liborio left to go to America I really didn't want to go there, and it was very hard to say no to him. For a short period of time I didn't have that much contact with Liborio, because it was really hard to say no to him when he asked me to follow him to the US.

In the end one of my best friends and students moved to Norway in 2006 and I came to visit while competing at the European Championships. I was supposed to be there for two weeks, but I ended up there for two months. I started to make friends in Norway, started to enjoy the country and I also met my girlfriend there.

At first I just used to travel back to Norway for seminars and to compete, but I would also teach at the academy as well. After a little while, the guys offered me a partnership at the academy. I'm lucky that I have lots of freedom at this stage, as we have some great instructors at the academy and I can travel and train as much as I need. I can do this knowing that the academy is in good hands.

How has the European scene changed since you first arrived?

I think it has changed a lot, but it has changed in a good way for sure. The people in Europe like to train hard and get better. It is definitely the real deal here now; Scandinavia has so much potential and is home to some tough fighters. They all like to train hard and it is all growing in the right direction. Obviously it is easier for me to talk about Scandinavia, but the people understand the Brazilian culture and enjoy every aspect of jiu jitsu.

So is there much difference between training in Brazil and Europe?

Of course the idea of training in Rio is really cool and there is lots of history, but in terms of the level of training I think Europe is really catching up now. It's difficult, because if I go to Rio I can make a phone call and have 10 or 12 black belts on the mat to train, but if you go there it won't be too different than if you were training at a good school in Europe. I think it's more of a sentimental trip for me when I go back to Brazil.

Looking at my one little academy in Norway, I already have European Champions, World Champions, Pan Am Champions and guys signing big professional MMA contracts, so jiu jitsu here is just getting stronger and stronger.

So do you think it will be long before we start to see some fresh European black belts winning major titles?

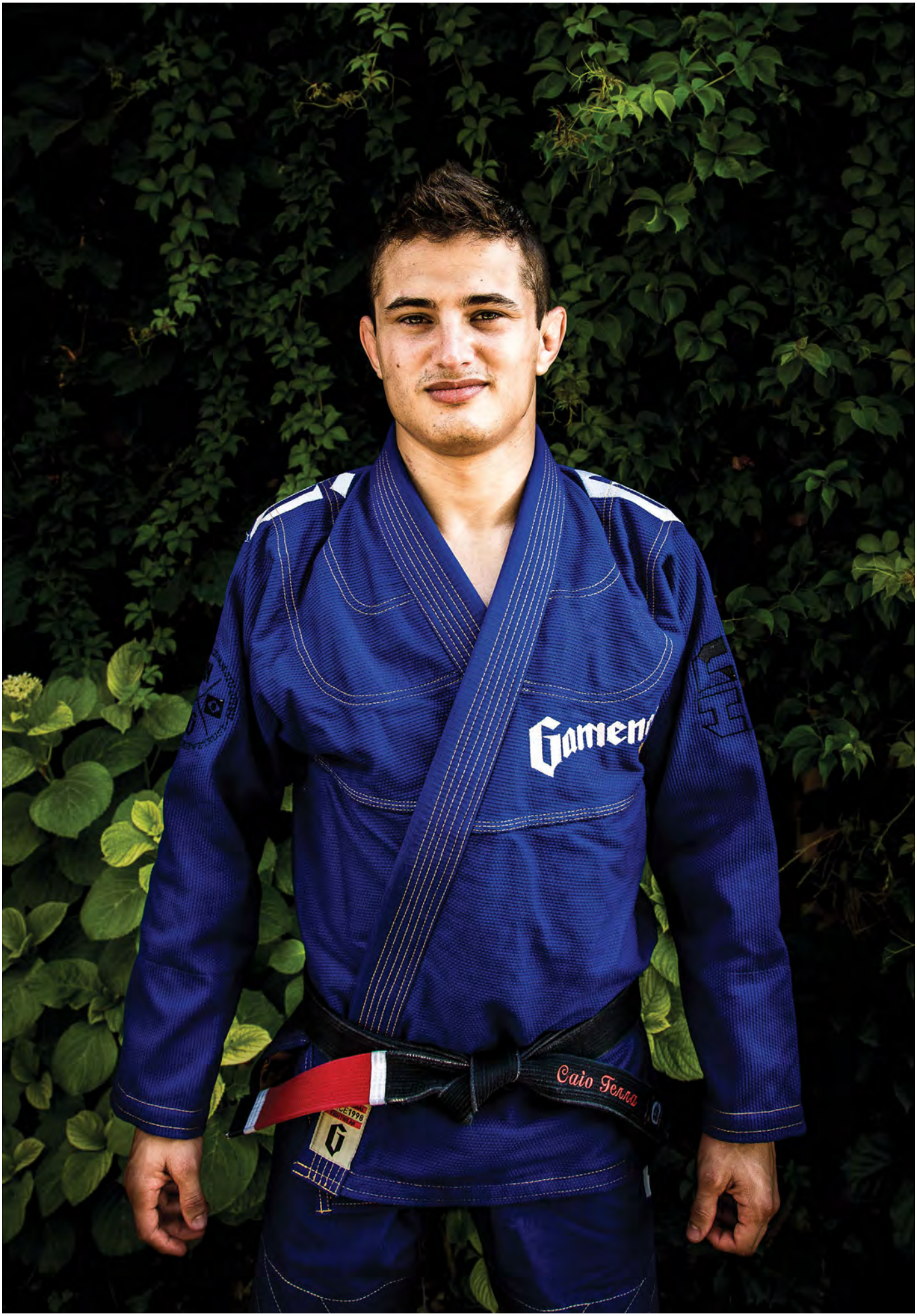
Well of course you have Alexander Trans already right up there fighting for gold. I don't think it will be too long, but in all honesty I'm really not worried about it right now. I think when it happens it will be a result of people gaining more experience, as I don't think there are that many people really going out and fighting in America. Now we have more IBJJF events coming up all over Europe and I think that will be a key factor in motivating more people to travel and compete at the big events in the US.

Who are some of the biggest characters you've met during your time in jiu jitsu?

Ha ha there are so many! Of course the guys at Carlson Gracie Academy were all big characters, and Wallid Ismail was obviously a huge character – he's a very funny guy. Carlson (Gracie) stands out of course. If he turned up at the academy, even just to watch, everything would change. Yeah, I'd say Carlson would be number one. I guess every academy has a character too, that guy who is full of energy and always joking.

Thanks for your time Teta! Is there anything else you'd like to say to our readers?

Let's get your magazine in Norway (laughs). I'd like to say hi to anyone that I have ever shared a mat with, as I've met so many amazing people, and of course a big thank you to my master Ricardo Liborio.


Caio Terra

TECHNIQUE CONQUERS ALL

Caio Terra

THE JIU JITSU PURIST

'Strength is nothing without technique' – how many times have you had this piece of wisdom relayed to you on the mats? It's why many of us started training BJJ, enthused by the knowledge that a weak individual empowered with the knowledge of jiu jitsu can overcome larger, stronger and more athletic adversaries. But - and it's a big BUT - no one said it would be easy.

No matter how big, strong or powerful you are, there will always be a time when you come up against a colossus contender who knocks you down from your ivory tower. It is in these moments that we can all relate to the importance of really honing your jiu jitsu skills in the original context, the context defined by Carlos and Helio Gracie.

For the young Caio Terra, every single day of training represented a challenge. Having been ushered into jiu jitsu by his mother in an attempt to help develop confidence and self-esteem, Terra was limited by his physical attributes from the start.

"I always tell people during seminars that for the first three months of my training I was just getting beaten up," recalls Caio on his first exposure to BJJ. "No techniques would work for me and I was just hanging in there. The only one person that I could beat was my mother, and the only move that would work was if we started from closed guard and I squeezed my legs together to make her tap (laughs). My mother started to train when I did to help motivate me."

Caio's story no doubt paints a familiar picture for many of us. Rewind back to your first months of training and try to remember your introduction to live sparring. With zero technical knowledge or experience you are left relying on brute force and strength – not much of a weapon if you are physically challenged. In short, there can be no denying that a weak individual's introduction to jiu jitsu will be completely different to that of a stronger one, which means we all face different obstacles if we are to flourish in the art.

"One of the major difficulties for smaller guys who start out is they find themselves not being able to apply many of the techniques they are learning," explains Caio. "That's because they are relying more on strength than on leverage and body mechanics, which is natural at first. Before jiu jitsu most of us relied on strength - if we couldn't open a bottle, we twisted harder. The problem is they don't have as much strength as everyone else.

▶ *'Strength is nothing without technique'*

TECHNIQUE CONQUERS ALL

▶ *'Strength is nothing without technique'*

"What can make this period even more frustrating is seeing the technique working for others who started after them or at the same time. Many less physical guys are left wondering 'if jiu jitsu is supposed to give the weaker person the advantage, why are the stronger guys winning?'

"I always tell my students who are physically weaker not to get discouraged. It will take them longer, usually about six months, depending on how much they train, before they will successfully apply the techniques. This is because it will require them to get a deeper and better understanding of jiu jitsu, one that relies on proper body mechanics and leverage, not strength. In this way the weaker guy gets to know jiu jitsu, and once they understand it they will have it the rest of their lives. No longer will they twist as hard as they can to open a bottle, they'll understand why the bottle cap is tight and be able to figure out a better way to open it. At my academies this type of thinking is applied to everyone. Even if you have some physical ability and you're a strong person, there is always going to be a stronger fighter out there. Strength may come and go, but once we learn technique, it's with us forever."

When looking at the trials and tribulations that a man of Caio Terra's physique must go through during training, you start to gain an understanding as to why he will often end up fighting from the guard. Terra's prowess as a guard player is second to none, with the multiple world champion known for his use of de la Riva and half guard as primary weapons. His excellent instructional DVDs 'Half Guard Techniques' and 'Modern Jiu Jitsu' are further examples of his comprehensive understanding of the position. Caio is just one example of many smaller, weaker jiu jitsu players known for their breath-taking guards. The likes of Rafael Mendes, Rubens Charles "Cobrinha" and the Miyao Brothers are all flying the flag as masters of the guard.

When asked why smaller guys tend to be guard players Caio points out, "At most jiu jitsu schools you start on your knees. As a white belt you don't know a lot and rely on what you do know, which is strength. You use your strength to get to a position you're comfortable in and that is usually anything on top. So when you start on your knees, what happens most of the time is that the strongest guy will just push forward and force the smaller person to fight from their back. As a result, smaller guys spend more time in guard, working hard just to survive and not get smashed. Eventually their guards start to develop, so instead of just not getting smashed they are able to use their partners pressure/force in their favour.

"It's interesting now with the evolution of jiu jitsu that you are seeing big guys at the top level, who started as guard players, guys like Keenan Cornelius. I believe you understand the whole jiu jitsu game much better if you develop your guard early in your training. I always tell my students that by playing guard early in your jiu jitsu career it will give you a better chance to succeed and make your top game that much better."

With weaker fighters often forced into the role of a guard player early in their development, it is their passing game that will inevitably suffer. It is no coincidence that most top level fighters in the lower weight classes look to pull guard, with many flat out refusing to come to the top and pass unless they can transition straight to their opponent's back. For Caio, he didn't start to feel truly comfortable with the passing game until late in his development.

"It took many years for me to play on top and – if I'm honest – I only really started to work the passing game at tournaments once I was a black belt," says Terra on developing his top game. "I love to play on top at the gym, but I wouldn't play on top at tournaments because I was a bit afraid of the unknown. I felt like trying to pass at the top level would leave me vulnerable to sweeps. Nowadays I actually feel that my top game is even better than my bottom game. A lot of guys at my gym ask me, 'Why don't you play on top at tournaments?' The answer is that most of the time, if I play on top at a tournament, I will be playing straight into my opponent's game plan. Most of the people that I compete with want to

"I BELIEVE THAT IF I WAS BORN BIGGER AND GIFTED WITH PHYSICAL ABILITIES, I WOULDN'T HAVE THE JIU JITSU THAT I HAVE TODAY"

pull guard or take me down to side control. If I pull guard I negate both of these."

When it comes to medal hauls, Caio's endeavours on the competition circuit speak volumes. For a man that was ushered into jiu jitsu with the hope of gaining self-confidence, he has proven to be one of the most successful rooster weight fighters in the history of the sport. Despite his eight black belt IBJJF World and three Pan Am titles at -55kg, Caio is perhaps best known for his endeavours in the absolute divisions. Before his arrival on the black belt circuit, the sight of a lightweight competitor entering an absolute division was a real rarity. No-one under 80kg would even consider mixing it with the 'bigger boys', intimidated by the sheer size of the opponents they would likely face and the prospect of being injured. For 55kg Terra, the absolute division was more than just a challenge; it was a platform to spread his message.

"When I fight in the open weight division it isn't to prove that I am better than anyone," explains Caio. "My goal has always been to show people that it is possible for a small guy to win in the open weight because I believe in jiu jitsu and what it was created for. Jiu jitsu gives the smaller person the tools to defeat a much larger opponent, to overcome many obstacles and to be efficient in life. On the mat and in life - technique conquers all. Before I started competing in the open weight division, I don't remember anyone under lightweight, maybe even middleweight, who would enter as well. I think now people realise it is possible – you even see blue belts at rooster weight go in to fight and this makes me happy.

"One great thing that came out of this is that it brought more attention to jiu jitsu. No-one cares if someone wins rooster weight, but when a rooster weight fighter wins an absolute division it makes the news. It shows people that through jiu jitsu a smaller person can really beat a bigger person, it isn't just marketing."

Terra is currently credited as the lightest man to win a black belt absolute division at an IBJJF event, with only Joao Miyao a possible challenger over the coming years. This willingness to fight with larger practitioners promotes an important message, one that can be translated into everyday training. As a weaker fighter, you must be prepared to spar with all comers of any size and strength, or else run the risk of limiting your development.

"I encourage everyone to roll with people of all sizes, as long as you are fit and healthy and there are no injury issues," says Terra. "I personally used to only like training with bigger guys, but when I opened my gym and the gym started to grow, I now have lots more high level lighter guys to train with. I think for competition preparation it's better to train with guys around your own size."

TECHNIQUE CONQUERS ALL

All this talk of size and strength begs the question: 'Is there an ideal body type for BJJ?' If you could design the perfect grappler, there probably wouldn't be too many people choosing a skinny, 55kg frame. "Every body type has its advantages and disadvantages," explains Caio. "That's the beauty of jiu jitsu, no matter what your body type, you are able to build your own game. From Bruno Malfacine to Roger Gracie, world champs comes in all different shapes in sizes. Sure it would be amazing to be as big and athletic as Buchecha, but I wouldn't say there's one perfect body type. We do know that being over 88kg you have a better chance of winning the absolute. To say strength and size don't matter would be untrue - strength and size do matter.

"I do believe that if I was born bigger and gifted with physical abilities, I wouldn't have the jiu jitsu that I have today," says Terra on his grappling style. "Lots of people ask if working out is good and I will always say that working out is a short cut. If you work out, you are probably going to perform better. But, in the long run, what happens when you are older and you lose your strength? When you are strong and you use your body too much you will always miss a little part of the technique, but a weak guy has to focus 100% on technique.

"I used to do some physical preparation with the Brazilian judo team and after a period of time my jiu jitsu would get so much better. But, after about a year of being a black belt, I decided to stop because I needed to get better at jiu jitsu to teach my students, not to get better at winning medals. Competition is just a small part of jiu jitsu and it's what I gain the least from I guess. My life doesn't change because I'm a world champion."

If you are looking for a stellar example of technical jiu jitsu, you can't go wrong with Caio Terra. His matches are a joy to watch, and his long standing rivalry with Alliance's decorated champion, Bruno Malfacine, has entertained Mundial fans for many years. As with everyone who practices jiu jitsu, Terra's game has evolved constantly through his training, picking up new details and techniques as often as he can.

"I have an open mind and I know that I still have lots to learn and lots to teach," states Caio. "I want my students to be the best they possibly can, and I know that means they will sometimes need to gain knowledge from other people as well. Train with everyone, and always have an open mind. We all do jiu jitsu."

As jiu jitsu students, and individuals, there will always be techniques that we find harder to pick-up than others. Consequently, it is easy to stay within your comfort zone, using only the techniques that have become your 'tried and tested'. However, by avoiding the positions you find challenging, you run the risk of hindering your innovation as a grappler.

"Sometimes you hear people say stuff like, 'Oh, I have a really hard time in that position, so I don't like to play that guard'," says Terra. "To be honest, I don't really like to play half guard, but it was a position that I always seemed to have problems with, so I forced myself to work on it. Look at Bruno (Malfacine) when he passes in his fights – he passes the same way all the time. I decided to always try and face his strengths head-on and try to work through the hardest route, and now I've won three times in a row against him. Always work on the things you're not good at, because once you develop skills in those areas, your game and understanding of jiu jitsu becomes that much more complete."

For Caio, the best way to develop has always involved tackling his weakest areas head on – how many of us can say the same? If you hate butterfly guard, maybe it's time you started to practice butterfly guard…

Though best known for his impressive arsenal of attacks and sweeps with the gi, Caio also boasts an incredibly effective nogi game. In fact, Caio has racked up an astounding five IBJJF World nogi titles and – if that wasn't enough – he did it in six consecutive years from 2008 to 2013.

"I started training no gi when I was a black belt, but I have students that started no gi before they even put on a gi," explains Caio. "I believe gi refines your technique but that isn't to say you can't be a technical grappler by just doing no gi. I have met very high-level grapplers who only do nogi.

"There are elements of no gi that are different than training in gi. Although I don't like to train nogi much, I do it because I believe it helps my gi training. I believe nogi training helps gi training and gi training helps nogi training, so train everything!"

It's hard not to be impressed by Caio's refreshingly open approach to training jiu jitsu. Having overcome the initial ordeal of being continuously smashed by stronger guys early in his career, Caio went on to cultivate a constructive approach to development that we can all relate to. It doesn't matter how strong you are, there will always be someone stronger. It doesn't matter if you're weak in closed guard, because you still need to learn it.

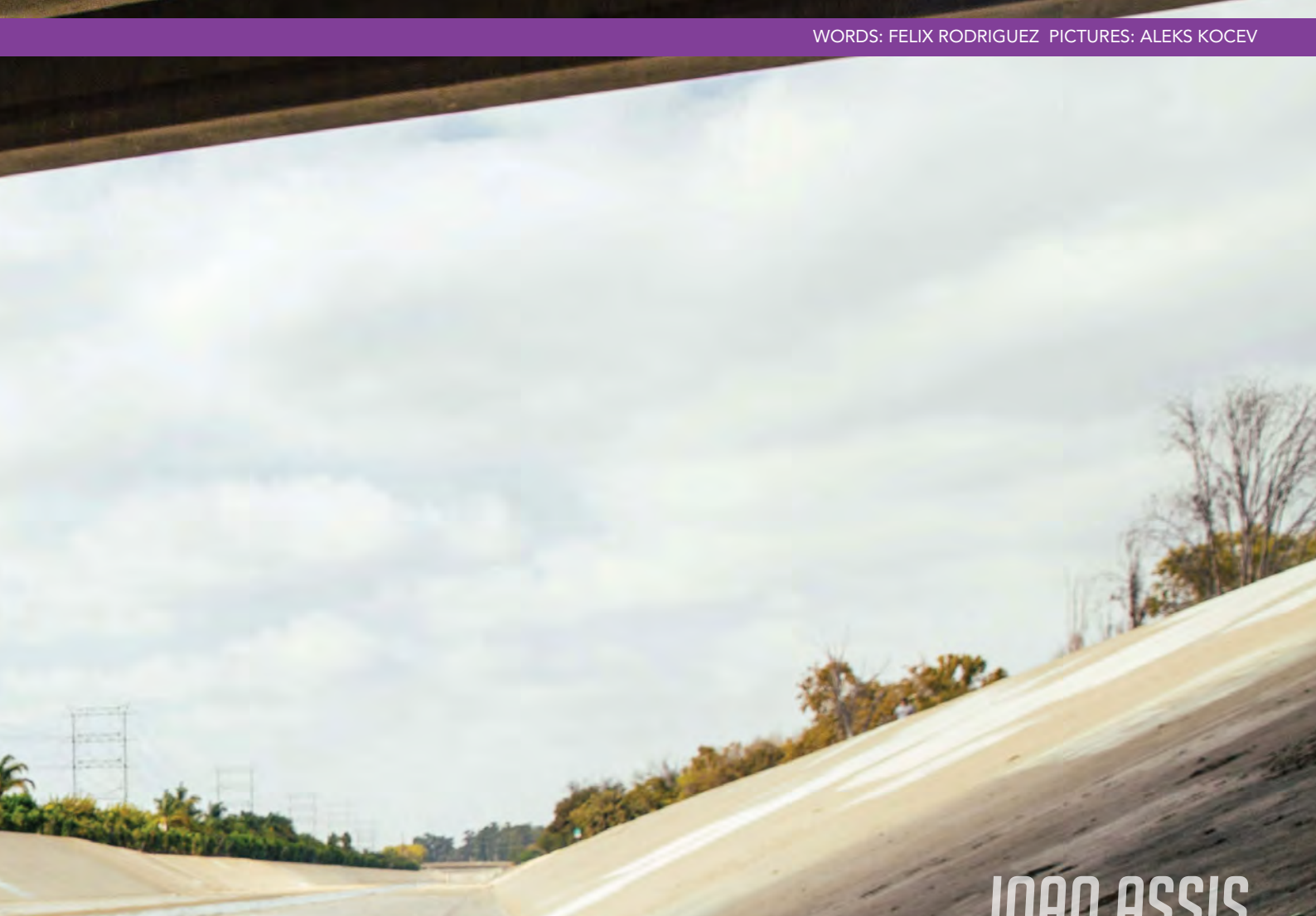
"Honestly, nowadays, I just want to have fun," says Caio in closing. "I believe if you train to be a world champion chances are you are going to quit, as it's very hard to be a world champion. If you train to have fun, every day will be a good day. As for competing, I don't have anything left to prove to anybody. If I continue to compete it will be for fun and to give motivation to my students. I want to showcase true jiu jitsu, as it was intended, and show that technique really does conquer all."

▶ *'Strength is nothing without technique'*

"Always work on the things you're not good at, because once you develop skills in those areas, you have no more fears"

SHOYOROLL GUARDA/90'S

WORDS: FELIX RODRIGUEZ PICTURES: ALEKS KOCEV



JOAO ASSIS
CHASING THE DREAM

Winning at the highest level of Brazilian jiu jitsu and submission grappling is not easy. Champions are expected to make sacrifices. To be the best - at anything - requires dedication, commitment, and an unwavering desire to stand above the others on a podium or have a belt wrapped around their waist. Favourite foods, alcohol, late nights, friendships, sometimes even sex; ask a world champion, and they'll likely tell you that they've gone without at least one of these things and probably name a slew of others we could never have thought of on our own. Champions are willing to make sacrifices that most of us aren't, because they are fuelled by the desire to win. It consumes them.

What would you sacrifice to become world champion? Jiu Jitsu Style asked Joao Assis, ADCC's reigning champion, the same question, and his answer was "everything."

RISK AND REWARD

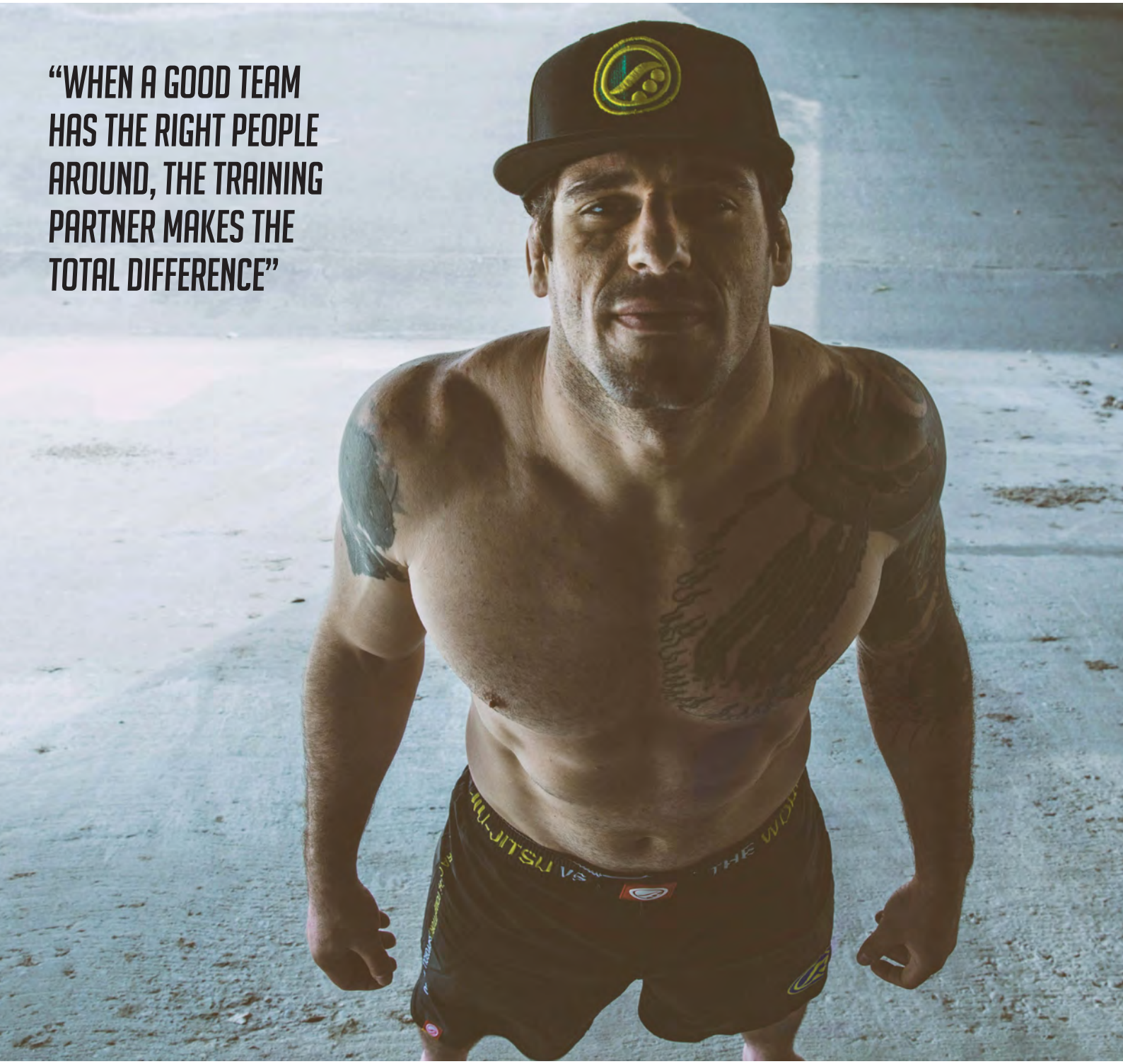
Joao had a comfortable life in Brazil. His wife worked as a journalist, and he trained jiu jitsu, went to the beach and hung out with his friends. We all know how good worn shoes feel to the owner's feet. Every nook moulded through custom use to make wearing them pleasantly monotonous. Had Joao chosen, this could have been his life in Brazil; a pleasant, comfortable, yet predictable and unremarkable existence where he might not have realised his full competitive potential. But Joao always had a burning desire to be the best, and when his wife became pregnant with their child, desire and necessity combined to create the perfect storm in his quest for a better opportunity.

Joao decided to leave everything behind in his native Brazil in order to chase a dream and provide a future for his growing family. Cognisant of the success some of his countrymen had experienced in the United States, he too decided to migrate north while still a brown belt. He came to the U.S. with no money, no contacts, no plan, and without full command of the English language; just a plane ticket, a goal and temerity for days. Joao knew he had what it took to be champion; he just needed the right environment to show the rest of the world what he was capable of. The right environment for him was sunny Southern California.

Joao's story has a happy Hollywood ending where the hero gets his hand raised in the end, but the path to his happily-ever-after was not without its fair share of trials and challenges. Joao's move to America was difficult at first, and he had to do whatever he could to bring food to the table. Necessity forced Joao to put pride aside and accept whatever odd jobs he could in order to provide for his family. If there was a way to make money legally, Joao jumped on it. From parking cars as a valet to washing dishes at restaurants to the more backbreaking chores like digging ditches in construction, Joao did what he could to make ends meet. The rough patches were hard enough to make him question his decision at times, but the need to support his wife and future child strengthened his resolve and helped him to remain patient until he was able to catch the break he needed. Joao's luck finally began to change for the better thanks to two things: foot locks and Dan Henderson.

UFC 88

Joao Assis does not forget his friends. The affable Porto Alegre-born fighter was quick to point out that Dan Henderson was the person whose help first made a significant impact on his family's life stateside. Henderson helped the Assis family by providing financial assistance and helping Joao navigate the process to become a permanent U.S. legal resident. Though no longer assisting with Dan Henderson's jiu jitsu at Team Quest, Joao is eternally grateful for all of Hendo's support in getting his name out there when he was still new to the U.S.



"WHEN A GOOD TEAM HAS THE RIGHT PEOPLE AROUND, THE TRAINING PARTNER MAKES THE TOTAL DIFFERENCE"

When Dan Henderson agreed to meet Rousimar Palhares at UFC 88, the American wrestler knew he was facing one of the most prolific foot lock masters in mixed martial arts. Palhares was becoming well known for his ability to end fights with a heel hook at a moment's notice, so Henderson went about looking for training partners who could help him to adequately prepare against Toquinho's relentless submission game.

"Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity" is a saying first credited to the Roman philosopher known as Seneca The Younger. If Joao Assis had lived during Roman times, Seneca could have easily been inspired by the circumstances surrounding Joao's ascension when he wrote this famous line. Despite the hardships experienced when first moving to the U.S., Joao had continued training and keeping his skills sharp as an up-and-coming Brazilian Jiu jitsu brown belt. When Henderson offered Joao an opportunity to come to Temecula and help him prepare for his fight against Toquinho, Assis took it without hesitation. The guys at Team Quest would help Joao improve his takedown offense and defense, while he would help the wrestlers, in turn, to become better at the submission aspect of mixed martial arts.

Although Assis was still a member of Checkmat (Brasa at the time), the move to Team Quest in Temecula made sense. Joao capitalised on the opportunity in order to secure a better future for his family through prizefighting. Although this experience turned Joao's attention away from mixed martial arts for a time, it did help open many other doors for him thanks to the development of his grappling skills.

BECOMING ADCC CHAMPION

Dan Henderson pried the door of opportunity open for Joao, and he burst through it with hard work and determination. Joao's relationship with Team Quest helped him to slowly begin building a name for himself, and he stayed active competing in local tournaments "every weekend." He also began teaching seminars and his academy roster began to grow. Joao's hard work was beginning to show gains. As he started putting all of his skills and experiences together, medals began piling up. His No-gi World Championship of 2008 was soon followed by one of Joao's most successful and productive years as a competitor. As a brown belt in 2009, he dominated the North American Grappling Association's regional circuit, became California's open weight champion and capped off the year by winning gold in the absolute division at the IBJJF's Pan American Championships. After such a sensational year competing on the mats, he received the ultimate accolade from his instructor, when Leonardo Vieira tied the faixa preta around Joao's waist. The gamble had paid off for Joao.

He was now a black belt under the newly formed Checkmat, one of the most promising teams of the time.

Joao kept working hard, and more success followed as he established a niche for himself as a formidable no-gi competitor. He took gold in 2010's No-Gi Worlds and earned a silver medal after barely coming up short against Dean Lister when they faced each other at ADCC's 2011 championship in Nottingham, England. But for Joao Assis, the best was yet to come. Joao would have to wait two years for another shot at Lister and travel halfway around the world to China to kill two birds with one stone at the 2013 Abu Dhabi Combat Club tournament.

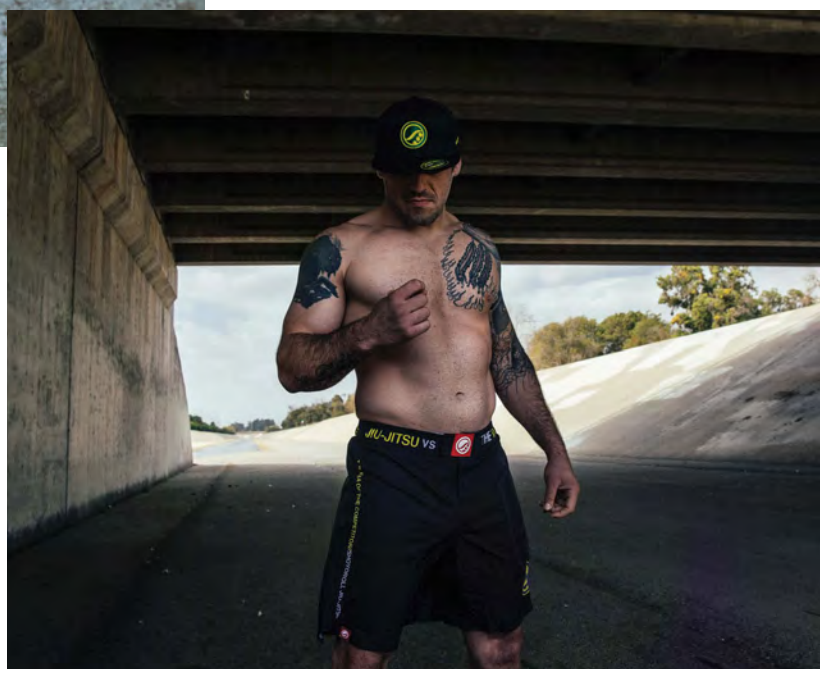
Joao refers to his jiu jitsu and submission-wrestling career as his "curriculum." When talking about his body of work his biggest and most obvious success as a tournament competitor came in 2013. That year he was crowned ADCC's 99kg division champion in Beijing, China. His rematch against Lister balanced the ledger with the American and earned him the title, which became the crown jewel of Joao's competitive career. Winning ADCC 2013 against Lister was particularly sweet because the American known as the 'Boogey Man' was one of the toughest opponents he's ever faced; Joao wishes he'd had an extra thirty seconds to submit the notoriously stubborn Lister.

IRON SHARPENS IRON

Joao is grateful for his accomplishments and is quick to point out that it's impossible to succeed as a jiu jitsu and submission-wrestling competitor all on your own. He believes that the secret to his success lies in having a strong support system, being willing to make sacrifices and having the right training partners to push you to your utter limit.

Joao knew that he had a strong support system in his wife, and he had already made enormous sacrifices in coming to America in search of the right opportunities and best training partners, so making the sacrifices every other champion is also expected to make was not that big of a deal to him. In his own words, "you gotta leave things behind – cool friends who are fun, but you cannot go partying with, you cannot eat [unhealthy foods] with everyone, the secret is not a secret – no matter how great you think you are, [to be champion] you need hard workout, hard training, hard work, and [good] sleep."

Regarding teammates, Joao feels that iron sharpens iron. "When a good team has the right people around, the training partner makes the total difference," he explains. As far as training partners go, he feels that he couldn't be better situated in that department because he trains at Checkmat along other greats like Lucas Leite and Marcus 'Buchecha' Almeida. When discussing the value of good training partners, Joao noted of Leite, "me, I had Lucas, he is the guy who made me see how everything works." Joao describes Leite's approach to the sport – "train three times a day, hurt, injured, fight when you're not 100 percent, leave everything on the mat" as a source of inspiration. Both men arrived in Southern California at the same time, Joao living in San Diego and Leite in Los Angeles. They took advantage of living relatively close to one another and became regular training partners who would spend "all day" on the mats trying to best each other. Joao believes that Leite helps him be a better fighter, because he is forced to constantly dig deep in order to overcome the relentless pace and tenacity of his good friend and training partner. Lucas has only one speed: kill.



Jiu Jitsu Style asked Joao who was the last person he'd want to have kneel in front of him after a long and torturous day of training, and he answered, without hesitation, anyone but Leite. "Lucas Leite has no heart. He will go every round like the final. He is the strongest in the weight I've ever seen, that guy. After the first roll, people start getting tired, and he gets stronger. He will be in the finals more strong than the first fight of the tournament. It's the way he fights, like a beast. I don't recommend him for the last train of the day, because he is a good hard fun," said Assis.

When not being pushed to his physical limits by Leite, Joao has to deal with the school's Big Dog, Marcus 'Buchecha' Almeida. Joao believes that the advantages of training with Buchecha are unquestionable. "Buchecha is really good. I met him as a 17-year-old blue belt. I could tell he would have a great future. Even at blue belt, he was training with black belts." Joao saw Buchecha evolve into the dominant champion he is today and has become a better competitor along with him because having to face guys like Buchecha and Leite day in and day out has not only made him elevate his technical game, but also his mental fortitude. "I could not have better training partners than Lucas and Buchecha. It helps. If you can get through their jiu jitsu, you can chase anyone any time. It's not just physical but mental; the harder the situation in training, the easier the training will be. Those guys make you so strong mentally because you train together and fight together; when one of us wins, everyone wins," said Assis.

RIDING OFF INTO THE SUNSET

Joao feels that his time on the tournament circuit is nearing its end. As he's gotten older his priorities have been shifting more and more toward his family and their needs, so he "cannot train all the time anymore" at the same consistent rate he knows is necessary to succeed at his level. His focus is now on adding names to his victory ledger as he faces top jiu jitsu names in Super Fight style matches. Joao participates in gi and no-gi competitions, but he has a clear affection for the kimono. He believes that training with it makes you better without it and points to his own personal experiences as proof. He noted, "gi training: everybody asks; it's a nice package. No-gi is more like a business or job, jiu jitsu [with the gi on] is an art. The gi is like a paint brush you can do things with, every day you learn something new that you can add to the picture you're painting. I have better results in no-gi. I don't know what it is, but my best medals are in no-gi grappling; and all my friends and idols practice in the gi as well."

Joao prefers the Super Fight format, because he is able to set a clear goal with an individual target in mind. He told Jiu Jitsu Style that it is easier to prepare for a single opponent mentally, physically and financially. He noted, "When you have one opponent you study his technique. You can plan your game based on their tendencies and their strong points." He feels that at this point in his career, this format is preferable to tournaments. According to Joao, "in tournaments you have about five minutes to plan your fight" so his "focus [is] on weaknesses of many opponents." There is little time to game plan specifics for each match, because there is no way of determining how brackets will sort themselves out.

Hard work yields results. This is the mantra Joao Assis has lived by his entire life. He prides himself in the fact that he came to a foreign country and made something of himself from nothing "with hard work and no connections." Years of consistent effort and sacrifices have enabled him to live comfortably now in California while doing what he loves to do for a living. Far gone are the days when Joao had to wake up at the crack of dawn to swing a hammer and break rocks in order to make ends meet. Now he spends his mornings improving his game alongside his teammates and sharing his knowledge with his students.

Proving himself at the highest levels of competition has allowed Joao to refocus his energy toward teaching at his academy and teaching seminars. This routine allows him to spend time with his wife and young family. He put in the work and made all the sacrifices early on in his career so that he wouldn't have to later in life. At 31 he is semi-retired and he does what he loves, because he wants to.

BEHIND THE BRANDS

"WE IDENTIFIED THE GAP, WHICH HAPPENED TO COINCIDE WITH THE STYLE OF GOODS WE WANTED TO MAKE, AND WE WENT FOR IT"

The sport of Brazilian jiu jitsu has exploded in recent years, with new academies and tournaments springing up seemingly every week. The colourful subculture of BJJ is perfectly illustrated by the vast array of fightwear companies making clothing for use in the gym and outside of it. One of the more popular and original brands is UK based Scramble. Founded in 2009 with nothing more than a hunch and a few scribbled ideas, Scramble are now one of the most familiar fightwear brands within the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu market. Owners Matthew Benyon and Ben Tong give us an insight into their business.

What would you say was the single factor that motivated you to begin your company?

There were a number of factors. We realised that no matter how hard we worked at our day jobs, the salary would not change, and the boss would get richer while we didn't. We had confidence that we could make something - we could design it and market it and people would buy it. We wanted to create something that our kids could inherit. We wanted to make things that would make people happy.

When you first began, BJJ commerce was still in a relatively early stage of development; what platforms and methods did you first use to market your brand to your intended audience?

Facebook and a UK based BJJ message board ("European Fight Network Forums"), as well as the blog, the Grappling Dummy. We also had a good relationship with a couple of international fight blogs (through freelance journalism) that helped promote our wares. Our first shop used Paypal and the Big Cartel platform.

Social media is a large component for any company; how much does social media play in terms of your general brand output?

It's huge. It's our primary source of contact with our customers. The best thing about it is even with no marketing budget, if you create good content, people will be willing to share it for you. So advertising becomes a question of merit rather than budget. So we try to create posts, pictures, videos etc. that have merit (could be comedy, could be a good deal, could be a particularly awesome video) that people will be happy to share and promote for you. We use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, our blog, and a newsletter. Every one of them is essential to the business.

What are the other methods you use to market your brand, e.g. print advertising, tournament ad boards, product placement etc?

We've done very well on a limited advertising budget so far. We support Jiu Jitsu Style magazine, and they support us, and have advertised on and off in Fighters Only magazine. Going into next year we'll look at a more comprehensive promotional strategy, supporting local tournaments and events. We also support the Bournemouth Open (BJJ), a great event run by a local gym.

Online users tend to be quite fickle and outspoken so how do you handle folk complaining, writing negative comments and spreading untrue rumours about your company?

We steer clear of most discussion forums due to the high proportion of stupidity, aggression and disinformation prevalent on them. In the past

we have stepped in to quash rumours or reply to really misinformed posters but generally we just try to do a good job day to day and let the results radiate out from that.

What kind of difficulties did you face when sourcing garment makers and suppliers, especially those from Pakistan, China and other countries outside your own?

Typical problems you encounter are samples being different to final batches, delays, poor communication and poor quality control. All of these can be controlled so the customer will hardly notice the speed bumps but that involves a lot of internal stress. We only really work with factories that we know and trust and we have a good relationship with now. We've had quality problems - as have all brands - but we have a good track record of overcompensating, turning potentially angry customers into customers-for-life.

What kind of hours can a brand owner of a start-up expect to churn over in the beginning?

All of them. For about a year I (Matt) worked full time in an office, came home and worked on Scramble until late in the night, five days a week, and worked on Scramble at weekends. At one point it became too much (after the birth of my second child) and I handed it all over to Ben, Scramble's co-owner, and he worked nights on the doors of clubs in town, and spent the days packing up Scramble orders. After a few months we both made the decision to go full time and never looked back.

In your experience, what was one of the worst problems or surprises scenarios in the early days of your brand and how did you counter this moving forward?

We bought way too many of the first batch of t-shirts. Way too many, and I overestimated how well they would sell. Also the shipment arrived in a port 5 hours drive away instead of being delivered to my house, which was a pain... We realised we had gone overseas too early and reverted to making smaller runs in the UK that would sell out quickly. A much better problem to have.

Your brand has built up over the years and is now synonymous with jiu jitsu, grappling and I would probably include MMA. Do you intend to grow into a different or wider market sector, e.g. other sports or maybe general leisure wear?

We've always wanted our fans to wear Scramble outside of the gym, so we focus a lot on making high quality leisure wear to go with our technical gear. We have previously thought about trying to break other markets but the more we talk with the people in those markets, the more we appreciate the jiu jitsu community, how friendly and open it is and how well connected we are. We have plenty of things in the pipeline but Scramble will remain at its core a technical and leisure wear company with strong jiu jitsu roots.

To aspiring new brands, what is your single message or helpful advice you could offer?

Don't bother. Honestly. We started in 2009, which is actually quite a while ago now. Back then, there was a gap in the market for what we were offering. We identified the gap, which happened to coincide with the style of goods we wanted to make, and we went for it. There was nowhere near the amount of brands around that there are today, the market is incredibly crowded now. It's not worth bothering with unless you have something truly unique to offer.

It's also very hard work to do things correctly. Pretty soon after you start (the starting is easy by the way) you're going to need to educate yourself on the laws of international trade, importing and exporting, tax, accounting, copyright, logistics... it is hard work and a constant learning process.

SCRAMBLE FACTS

NAME:
SCRAMBLE SPORTS LTD

FOUNDED:
2009

OWNERS:
MATTHEW BENYON, BEN TONG

BASED:
POOLE, DORSET, UNITED KINGDOM

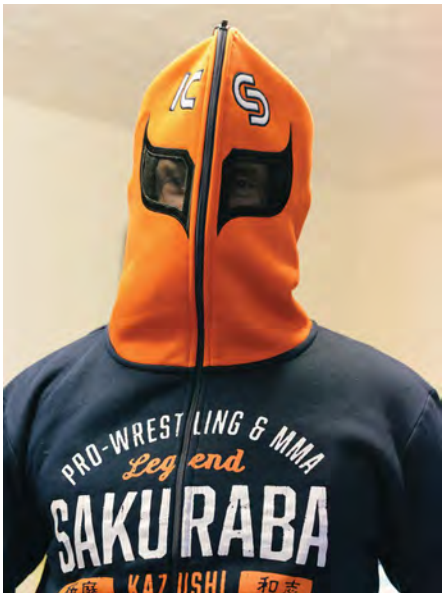
FIRST PRODUCTS:
BJJ BASICS AND REAL HEART T-SHIRT

STAFF:
FOUR FULL TIME, ONE PART TIME

PRODUCT OUTPUT PER YEAR:
APPROXIMATELY 50

NUMBER OF SPONSORED ATHLETES:
APPROXIMATELY 20

WEBSITE:
WWW.SCRAMBLESTUFF.COM



BUDO JAKE

TRAINING WITH RICKSON GRACIE

I'VE INTERVIEWED AND TRAINED WITH ALMOST ALL THE BIGGEST (LIVING) NAMES IN THE BJJ WORLD ON MY SHOWS *"THIS WEEK IN BJJ"* AND *"ROLLED UP"*. EVEN THOUGH THE SHOWS HAVE BEEN RUNNING FOR A FEW YEARS NOW, THERE'S ONE LEGEND THAT I HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO PIN DOWN. HE DOESN'T HAVE AN ACADEMY, RARELY DOES SEMINARS, AND HAS NO INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS (IN ENGLISH) ON THE MARKET. OF COURSE I'M TALKING ABOUT RICKSON GRACIE.

"WITH THE FILMING NOW OVER, I EXPECTED RICKSON TO QUICKLY PACK UP AND BE ON HIS WAY. SURPRISINGLY, HE WAS VERY GENEROUS WITH HIS TIME AS HE SPENT ABOUT AN HOUR GOING OVER KEY DETAILS OF HIS CROSS CHOKE, HIS SCISSOR SWEEP, AND HIS OPEN GUARD"

I have great respect for the Gracie family for the hard work they have done which has affected my life so greatly. Even though I have trained with many of the best in BJJ, I can't count how many times I was told, "You have to train with Rickson. You have to experience his teachings at least once". The way many spoke of him was almost godlike. Here and there guys would show me little details that they learned from Rickson. I have to admit, the details were really cool! Eventually, "training with Rickson" was mentally added to my bucket list. I didn't know when or how, but I vowed to take one of his classes someday.

Fast forward to sometime in July 2014. I was contacted by Rickson's business partner saying that Rickson would like to come on my show *"This Week in BJJ"*. Of course I replied that he was welcome to come on, but I also stipulated that the format of the show is an interview followed by techniques on the mat. Just like late night talk shows have interviews followed by live music. It's just the way it is! I received a reply stating that Rickson would show technique also. "Wow, is this real life?" I wondered.

The day finally came and I was still unsure if he would really bring his gi. Of course Rickson's a man of his word and there he was, with his gi under his arm, wrapped in a tattered black belt with 8 stripes on it. Anyone who's met Rickson knows he's a pretty intense guy. I felt it immediately. He was friendly but on a mission. Rickson had been on a media tour that whole week. On Rogan's three-hour show, Joe asked him all kinds of questions spanning the past four decades. What questions were left to ask? You can watch the interview on YouTube but suffice to say I focused primarily on questions relating to his mindset. After the interview was over it was time for the good stuff – mat work. Now, Rickson had previously said that he would never make an instructional video. Sure there were a few grainy seminar videos floating around but he never allowed anyone to properly film him teaching. I don't generally get nervous being on the mat with anyone, but it started to dawn on me, that what was happening was really unprecedented.

The first thing Rickson wanted to demonstrate was (standing) postural stability. I've done these kinds of "balance tests" before and I think there's a lot of value in them. Even so, Rickson is very intense on the mats and as he walked towards me simulating a self-defence situation, it was easy for me to imagine how many times he has probably done this (for real) in the streets. There's something very different training street self-defence with someone who has actually applied the moves in the street. Rickson wanted to show the posture that a bouncer should have when stopping someone from getting by. He emphasised keeping your weight forward, on the balls of your feet. When he asked me to push him, his body was as I expected, very stable.

Many shows that we watch on TV are scripted. Every detail is planned in advance and scenes are shot and reshot until they are perfect. *"This Week in BJJ"* is not like that. Everything is shot once, with no further editing taking place. When Rickson put me in a standing rear choke and asked me to get out, I did what felt natural,

spinning out of it. What I didn't realise was that he wanted a particular defence, a hip throw. After performing the hip throw, he resisted the throw and I was unable to move him at all. He then showed the detail of walking backwards while pushing your hip into him to make him bend over. Once your attacker is bent over, he's easy to throw.

The final thing Rickson chose to show (on camera) was how to do an upa properly when mounted. In typical Rickson style, first he asked me to do it and he didn't resist. Then he resisted and I couldn't complete the movement. Now some of you may be thinking, "C'mon doing an upa when mounted? That's day one jiu jitsu!" But I have heard many stories of him doing the same test at his seminars on high-ranking black belts. Usually he chooses the highest-ranking guy in the room and shows him the "right" way of doing the movement. It can be quite a humbling experience! I don't care about looking bad though; I just care about learning, and learning I was!

With the filming now over, I expected Rickson to quickly pack up and be on his way. Surprisingly, he was very generous with his time as he spent about an hour going over key details of his cross choke, his scissor sweep, and his open guard. All of the details were really, really good. I have to admit, it was quite an emotional experience for me. With my head full of newfound details and the realisation that a big accomplishment (filming Rickson) was complete, I was drained! Even so, it was now 5pm; time to drive to the academy to train. The only difference was that today I had some new things to work on.

You can see all of these techniques on YouTube (or iTunes). They are difficult to explain in words. Even in video, it's hard to really grasp the feel of the moves. Rickson calls his jiu jitsu "Invisible Jiu Jitsu" meaning that you can't really see what's going on. To really understand it you have to feel it. At first I thought that was just marketing, but I have come to agree. These small details really do need to be felt. Now are these "invisible" details exclusive to Rickson? From my experience, most black belts, particularly those that have been training for decades and decades, have lots of really good details. That being said, Rickson is someone very special. I encourage you to search him out, try to attend one of his seminars. Leave your ego at home and prepare to learn!

One of Rickson's main points that he's pushing is a renewed focus on self-defence. Since the episode aired there have been many lively discussions about who is training the "real" jiu jitsu and what "real jiu jitsu" even means. To some, self-defence is the core of the art. As Rickson told me, without a self-defence component, BJJ risks becoming as combat effective as modern Tae Kwon Do. Rickson is not a fan of moves like the berimbolo or inverted guard, as they don't work in self-defence situations. This perspective is completely understandable. Particularly when you think of where Rickson came from and how he helped build up the BJJ image through his challenge matches, both in the dojo and out.

On the other hand, there is the sport side, which has really helped BJJ grow in America and around the world. Sport jiu jitsu is fun, is an incredible workout, and allows one to compete in as realistic a fashion as possible without strikes. Competition has bred innovation as the conditioning and technical prowess continues to increase among the athletes.

Some schools practise self-defence exclusively, some practise sport exclusively, and most practise some kind of balance between the two. What is the exact percentage that's best? There are strong opinions on both sides, and I spent the first couple years of my BJJ training focusing on self-defence, with the past eight years mostly on sport. The beauty of BJJ is that as it spreads around the world we have more and more options. We have more options of schools to attend and more options of competitions to compete in. Enjoy your training and stick with it. The learning never ends!

SPICE BJJ CAMP

WHILE SITTING ON THE MAT IN THE AFTERNOON SUN, WITH ONLY THE SOUND OF THE OCEAN COMPETING WITH CAIO TERRA'S TEACHINGS AND WITH THE PROSPECT OF YET ANOTHER DELICIOUS TURKISH MEAL ON THE CARDS IN A FEW HOURS, I DECIDED LIFE COULDN'T GET MUCH BETTER...

Our daily training session was at an end, with our brains in overdrive digesting the gold from Caio's class. Now it was time to lose the kimonos, kick back and enjoy the rest of the afternoon by the pool - just another day at the Spice BJJ Camp.

Situated on the Mediterranean coast of south west Turkey, Antalya is the country's largest international sea resort and home to the Spice Hotel and Spa. It was at this five star resort that Caio Terra, Yuri Simoes and Kit Dale would spend ten days teaching jiu jitsu to travelling practitioners from all over the world. And it truly was a global affair, with students arriving from Australia, USA, Germany, England, France and Israel to name but a few.

Upon arrival at the hotel, I was immediately blown away by the beautiful surroundings that I was set to enjoy for the next two weeks. The swimming pool was the biggest I'd ever seen, the private beach and pier overlooked a clean, clear stretch of the Mediterranean sea, and the hotel staff were all extremely friendly.

Once settled into my room (which boasted a breath-taking view of the sea) I was greeted by the camp organiser, BJJ purple belt and hotel owner, Ozan. Having made sure I had everything I needed, and after drifting into conversation on how to kill the berimbolo, Ozan told me that tomorrow's training was at 3pm, but I should head to the pool bar if I wanted to hang out with the other arrivals.

After a quick shower and change of clothes I made my way down to meet my new training partners, and it wasn't long before I was enjoying a cold beer and making new friends. After talking at length with two practitioners from Mongolia about the best takedowns for BJJ, I ended the night watching the hotel entertainment in the purpose built auditorium alongside Kit, Caio and Yuri. If tonight was anything to go by, this trip was going to be a blast.

Next morning, at breakfast, I was greeted by the rest of the camp attendees before we all tucked-in to an epic buffet. Our host Ozan suggested I try a local delicacy, a rich sausage that was only produced in Turkey - it went down a treat alongside my Spanish omelette. We were once again briefed ahead of our first training session before making our way down to the pool in unison.

The rest of the morning was spent chilling out in the sun, talking about jiu jitsu and generally having fun in new surroundings. As you'd expect, it was Kit that gained most attention around the pool, having excelled in the high jump

"HAVING CAIO AND YURI SHOWING THEIR FAVOURITE TECHNIQUES FOR SPECIFIC SITUATIONS, AND THEN KIT'S CONCEPTUAL APPROACH TO TEACHING, WAS A REALLY GREAT COMBINATION"

competition and mastering the hotel's official dance after minimal tutelage from the entertainment staff. If jiu jitsu doesn't work out for him, there's a career in show business ready and waiting.

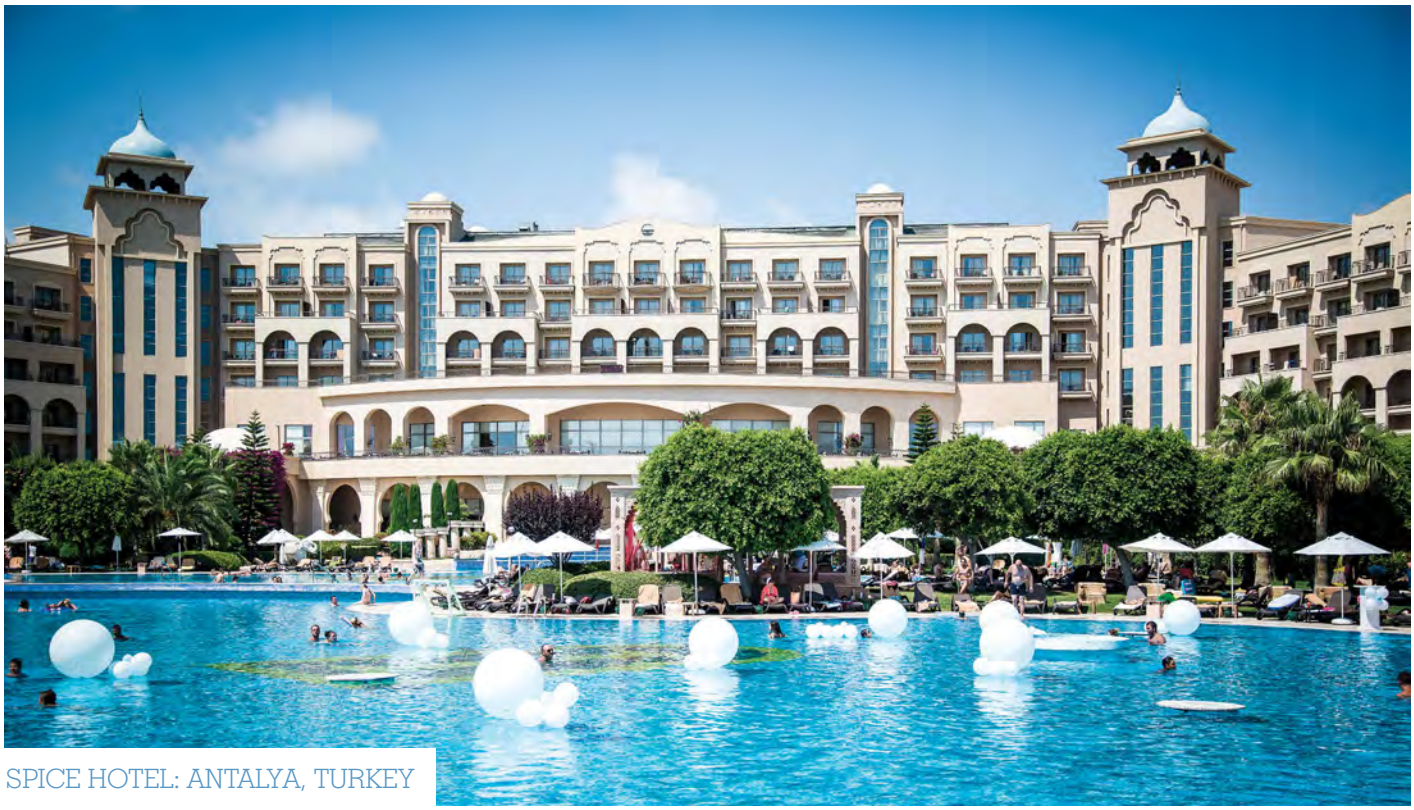
Our first training session was taken by Caio, who went on to explain that Yuri, Kit and himself would rotate as the instructor on a daily basis and teach for three hours per day. Initially there was supposed to be two sessions a day, but it was decided that one longer session in the afternoon was a better way to make sure people were able to enjoy their holiday alongside some decent training. "I think the approach to training was great actually," says Alex from Lebanon. "I guess people who wanted to train three or four times a day like it was a competition training camp wouldn't like the approach, but I really enjoyed one session a day. It was cool to really digest the techniques the guys showed, train hard, then chill out and enjoy the hotel as well."

As expected, Caio's instruction was out of this world. Instead of rocking up and saying, "today we are going to learn half guard", Caio started each of his classes by asking us all what we would like to learn, so we got to cover the techniques we really wanted to. When it came to sparring, it was almost as much fun watching Caio, Yuri and Kit toying with the students as it was attempting to spar with them myself. I came away from the first class with heaps of new pointers to add into my game, as well as the buzz of rolling with three world class fighters.

Once of the best aspects of the training was that all three instructors adopted very different approaches to teaching. Caio's strength lies in the details, with his techniques geared towards using as little power as possible. Yuri's classes often involved intense warm ups, followed by explosive guard passing or dynamic sweeps. Kit's approach was more focussed on concepts, often involving lots of positional sparring followed by reflective Q&A sessions. It was amazing how well the three masters' teaching complemented each other, and everyone loved it.

"Kit's approach is pretty unique, but it's also very interesting," explains Jon from Germany. "Having Caio and Yuri showing their favourite techniques for specific situations, and then Kit's conceptual approach to teaching, was a really great combination."

Though we would generally eat together on a daily basis, on the third day Ozan suggested we visit one of the hotel's a la carte restaurants and for everyone to bring along their families. I'd travelled alone, but it was great to see that many of my new training partners had come with wives,



SPICE HOTEL: ANTALYA, TURKEY

AESTHETIC
FIGHTAESTHETIC.COM

ALEX CABANES THE AURORA IV KIMONO

AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY AT MARTIALARTSSUPPLIES.COM AND ROLLMORE.COM

"I'VE BEEN ABLE TO HAVE A REALLY RELAXING HOLIDAY WITH THE WIFE AND KIDS, BUT I ALSO GET TO GO TRAINING FOR A FEW HOURS IN THE AFTERNOON WITH A BUNCH OF WORLD CHAMPIONS"

girlfriends and kids. "It's worked out great actually," says Ian from England. "I've been able to have a really relaxing holiday with the wife and kids, but I also get to go training for a few hours in the afternoon with a bunch of world champions. There's plenty to do around the hotel, so the family have been kept quiet."

Jiu jitsu and sun bathing aside, there was always something exciting going on around the hotel. Many of us took advantage of the jet skis, banana boats and parasailing available at the beach, but it was the hotel football pitch that brought out a certain Caio Terra's competitive edge. It would seem the multiple world champ is also a frustrated Neymar Jr in his spare time.

The weekly pool party was one of my personal highlights from the week, with plenty of good music and everyone having an awesome time. One of Ozan's many surprises included arranging for the BJJ camp members to get the pool party underway. Donning our gis and with a bottle of champagne in hand, we took to the stage and showered the pool with bubbles as the MC announced our arrival in Antalya. I can't speak for everyone, but standing there in my kimono, with a bottle of champagne in hand, I felt like a rock star!

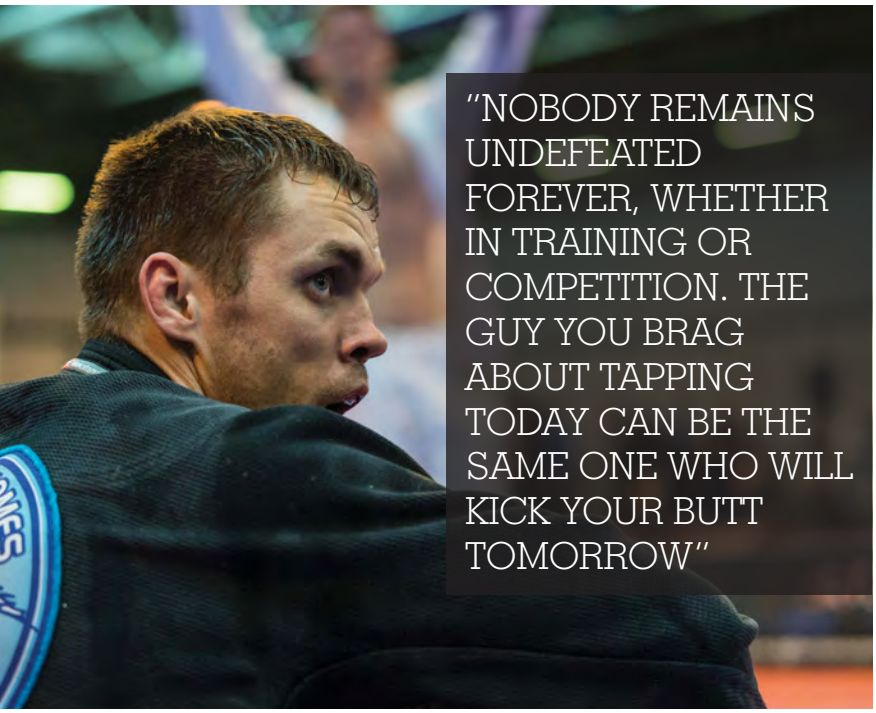
As the trip came to an end, and en route to the airport, I had a chance to reflect on the last 10 days. For me, the Spice BJJ Camp was the perfect mix of training, relaxing and having fun. Let's be honest, we can't all afford to travel to Brazil, but training with guys like Caio Terra in beautiful surroundings at a 5 star hotel has to come a close second.

I travelled to Antalya safe in the knowledge that I was going to get excellent training, but I hadn't counted on having so much fun, staying in such an amazing hotel and meeting so many new friends from around the world. The camp more than lived up to its expectations, and I look forward to attending again next year.

MACHADO TALKS

THE JIU JITSU STUDENT: A CODE OF HONOUR FOR THE MODERN TIMES

When we cross the doors of an academy it is not clear what we are going to find, until our gi has been worn and we step onto the mat area. Often a friendly atmosphere can either last or dwindle as the interaction begins between two training partners.


"NOBODY REMAINS UNDEFEATED FOREVER, WHETHER IN TRAINING OR COMPETITION. THE GUY YOU BRAG ABOUT TAPPING TODAY CAN BE THE SAME ONE WHO WILL KICK YOUR BUTT TOMORROW"

As a white belt, a rookie student does not yet have the knowledge, but he has the expectation and the drive to learn what it takes to fulfill his ambition to become more confident and capable. What he may lack in technique he will try to compensate with strength. The focus is often more physical than technical. At that critical time, it is a must that instructors emphasise more than just the move, but the way to move when training. Here are the tips I suggest from the start.

FOLLOW A STRUCTURE ***(Warm up and drill before rolling):***

It is not uncommon for students to start rolling as soon as they get on the mat, especially in classes where structure is not defined, and all involved want to get their jiu jitsu fix. Beginners, in particular, are more prone to injure either themselves or a training partner, if allowed to start rolling before they learn the basics of how to use a technique safely. It is a good feeling to get to roll and have a good work out, yet the long-term progress of a student will be dramatically improved if some degree of discipline is established from the start. There is time for proper training, but doing drills and making the body ready for the workout will save a lot of pulled groins, shoulder and neck sprains. And, of course, build motor skills that will result in more effective techniques and flow.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT ***(When training, going for the kill does not mean killing):***

How common it has become to see a class where students derive how well they are doing by how many submissions they can get during a session. Of course, among the pieces of the jiu jitsu puzzle, submission plays a critical role, yet it is no more than the culmination of many steps until a completion. It is so important that first, all students become aware of the nature of a submission, like a choke, which causes loss of consciousness; or a joint lock, which sprains a ligament or breaks a bone. The reasoning behind it, which must be explained by a responsible instructor, is that often a training partner may hyper-extend a joint just because he is unaware of how far he is supposed to go when applying pressure upon executing, For example, an armbar - I recommend that submissions can be set up QUICKLY, but always finish them SLOWLY, especially during a regular training session. Which brings to mind the importance of CONTROL. A safe technique does not lack its lethal aspect, but it is applied with constraints. The objective is to get to it, not to go beyond the limit the person who is submitted can endure. A hurt student can become a lost student, or an unwelcome liability to an academy.

THE GOAL IS TO FLOW, NOT JUST TO KNOW
(Knowledge has to be practical; knowing a lot and doing little is not the formula; doing more with less is the key):

I believe students are often overwhelmed when starting their training. Jiu jitsu is such an intricate art, with so many moves, variations and details that an excited instructor may fall prey to teaching too much from the start; what I call the OVERKILL. The addition of DVDs and digital stream videos brings the amount of information available to an unimaginable level. Yet, jiu jitsu should be learned from the most basic to the most advanced move, and not the other way around. The basic concepts of jiu jitsu are the pillars of the more sophisticated knowledge that will follow suit as they climb the ladder in ranks. I would rather learn one move with more details and repetition than a bunch of fancy moves that will leave holes in my game later on. I have seen amazing fighters with a virtually impassable guard game, and ironically with complete ignorance on how to escape from a simple side control or mount position.

There are three stages in learning a technique: The drill without resistance, the drill with some resistance and the drill while scrambling (simulating a sparring session where the drill can be adjusted for more effectiveness, as if used in training or competition). Changing the order of this sequence will only weaken a student's ability to seize and keep the techniques.

We often see students who are known as "Scramblers", or in a more popular fashion, "Mat Rats". They spend most of their time rolling, and will undeniably get tough by the sheer amount of time they share on the mat. Yet, when put to the test, several of them fail in situations a much less experienced student would be able to get out of. I do not condemn students who spend extra time on the mat, but I strongly recommend they spend some time working on their techniques and drills instead of the entire time just on sparring. Once the student dominates the set up and the finish of a move, the focus lies on the transitions, which will foster the FLOW (in my opinion the most fun part of training). As students tap into the flow, they do not become focused on tapping or getting tapped, but on constant movement with less and less effort (which means having a healthy ego and winning attitude). So, just a reminder: If you have too much to remember when you start, you will have a hard time focusing on a move; if you know a move well before getting into another, the stage will be set for you to become a technical and formidable training partner! Remember, do not go YouTube crazy and buy every instructional manual on the market! Get enough info you can use that matches your learning stage!

STAGNATION KILLS MOTIVATION ***(Climbing a mountain does not end when we get to the top, for other summits will wait to be conquered. Yet, between mountain tops there are the valleys, the slumps we all go through in between our goals of reaching new heights):***

If a student sticks around long enough, he or she will surely stumble into a slump. It is a normal part of any training regime, when athletes feel that, regardless of the time and effort they put into practice, it does not seem that they are getting any better, or at a good enough rate. First, the training has to be fun, which helps alleviate the times a student falls into the jiu jitsu "DEAD ZONE". A scientific explanation of such a process, from a physiological point of view, lies in the fact that motor skills reach a critical stage when muscle and nerve connections need a reset, like pushing a "REFRESH" button. In practical terms, a week or some extra days of rest from anything jiu jitsu related is always the best way to get back into the groove. It is often the case that when a student comes back from a break, his pace is more relaxed, and his techniques and flow will also improve. It is not by pushing harder that someone will get out of the slump. A slump is just a sign that we all need a bit of a break from the training routine. I, for example, like to swim and play soccer when taking a break from training jiu jitsu. The weird thing is that when I get back on the mat, I start playing some moves that I had not done in a long time, or start altogether to work on a new game. It will definitely get someone out of the jiu jitsu "DEAD ZONE"!

SUPERIOR TECHNIQUES ARE A REASON TO BE HUMBLE, NOT ARROGANT ***(How often a dedicated or gifted student succumbs to his/her own ego, as the level of his/her skill set surpasses the average of the rest of the crowd):***

The irony of course is that what leads someone to excel are virtues that will only further his/her growth if their ego is kept in check. A consistent student who follows through with a regular schedule, does all the training and drills, gets fit and leads a healthy lifestyle, will invariably progress at a faster rate. Add to it natural ability, physical attributes and you get a powerful set of ingredients to create a jiu jitsu machine. But, a strong body and technique are just two of the corners of a triangle. Without the proper mental and emotional feedback, an immature student who gets good quickly will be tempted to believe he/she is more special or superior than their fellow class mates.

If that attitude grows any further, some subtle changes of behaviour will eventually take place, turning a once friendly and awesome training partner into an arrogant p***k of a student. One of the first symptoms of an egotistical student is the behaviour of consistently punishing the lower belts without giving them any help after finishing a sparring session. Another subtle trait of a big ego is the act of hiding the "secret moves" or "aces" from everyone. Hiding a technique for the selfish reason of perpetuating a momentary superiority on the mat is the first sign of decay. A serious and promising student knows that the less he/she shares, the more he or she will lose in the end. I would rather show my training partner a counter to my move and then try to get them, than maintain an advantage that will prevent me from making my technique even better.

One of the most revealing truths about jiu jitsu is that it will never remain the same, and so change will happen to many upcoming training partners or competitors someone may face in a not too distant future. That secret move we may think is a secret may be also part of someone else's arsenal. The difference may be that he/she does not mind sharing it with others, and in the process not only making the same move more improved, but also becoming aware of how to better counter it. I would hate to get a taste of my trick by being submitted by someone with that same move in a tournament, just because I was too proud and arrogant to share it with others before going to competition. In jiu jitsu, like life, there is nowhere to go, nor to hide, when your turn finally comes. Better be ready than sorry!

GET BUSY TRAINING INSTEAD OF TALKING ***(Nobody wants to hear how good or awesome you are; train to learn, not to brag):***

The jiu jitsu culture in Brazil has always been to do the talking on the mat and let everyone else talk about you. One of the most common rules, which I believe still holds today, is that students do not waste time making comments about how they got to tap a fellow training partner, or even someone from another school. We all know that on any single day anyone can get tapped. It is actually a welcome event to learn that we need to learn, and tapping is nothing more than a reminder we need more work. We will always be a work in progress, no matter how great we can become. That is what makes jiu jitsu amazing, the excitement of knowing that learning will never end. So, to use a blip on the radar (which is what I consider someone getting tapped) as a reason to brag, is such a waste of time and energy, and also unfair to whoever we practise with. It is like gossip, a serious athlete or future champion does not have the inclination to treat each training session as a reason to make him look good by talking about what he does to others. Nobody remains undefeated forever, whether in training or competition. The guy you brag about tapping today can be the same one who will kick your butt tomorrow. And even if that is not the case, someone, someday, somewhere, will come to make justice and shut the mouth of the bragger. Remember, keep your mouth shut and you will be peaceful in moments of war, since there is nothing to prove or account for.

CARLOS MACHADO

9th Degree Coral Belt
Owner RCJ Machado Jiu-Jitsu Inc.

LEARNING TO LOSE

IN LIFE THERE ARE CERTAIN 'UNSHAKEABLE TRUTHS': IN SCIENCE - 'WHAT GOES UP MUST COME DOWN', IN RELATIONSHIPS - YOU WILL, AT SOME POINT, SAY THE 'WRONG THING' TO YOUR PARTNER. IN BJJ - IF YOU COMPETE REGULARLY, YOU WILL, SOONER OR LATER, LOSE.

It is said that we learn more from our losses than we do from our wins and whilst this may be true, for many it is not inevitable. Losing can be a deeply problematic and negative experience; just sit in the crowd of any tournament and witness the disappointment, anger, tears and grief from many leaving the mat after a loss.

Effort is required if we are to use our losses as a positive learning experience.

WHY DOES LOSING MAKE US FEEL SO UNCOMFORTABLE?

Although there may seem to be many and varied reasons for 'losing badly', the key causes are much more fundamental. Humans, in evolutionary terms, are designed to survive. This may take the 'romance' out of life a little but it is ultimately what we are all about- trying to survive long enough to pass on our genes and prolong our legacy.

Our brains are 'hardwired' to keep us alive by warning us of danger and to either fight (if annihilation of the threat is almost 100% certain) or run and hide (if you are way out of your depth and need to exit fast!). This process is governed by the threat and self-protection system (the sympathetic nervous system) of our brains and involves the amygdala (feel free to use these terms on the mat during academy trivia chat!).

The sympathetic nervous system is designed to pick up on threats and gives us signals; bursts of feelings such as anxiety, anger or disgust. These are very often the same sort of emotions you will see from 'losers' at tournaments. Fundamentally then, when we lose we are feeling threatened, in danger and as if our very existence is 'on the line'. Being the 'worst' in a group sets off alarm bells. There is an old joke in regard to survival that says, 'you don't have to run faster than the wolf. You just have to run faster than your friend!' Funny, but not if you are the one at the back!

This process has been in place since the beginning of human kind in a time when life was fraught with genuine risk. Thankfully, most of us reading this do not live lives of such threat (I bow and nod acknowledgement to those who do live such lives.) For the most part, the 'dangers' have changed as our modern lives have become socialised.

MEETING MR.MASLOW

Abraham Harold Maslow was an American psychologist best known for his 'Hierarchy of Needs' model. In short he said that humans need, and sequentially work toward, a number of achievements in order to thrive.

According to Maslow, there are five levels, ranging from the first; biological and physiological needs - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, and sleep; to the fifth, self-actualisation needs - realising personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experience. Nestled in between, at number three, are the needs that concern us as potential losing competitors: social needs - belongingness, affection and love from work group, family, friends, and romantic relationships.

One of our greatest fears and dangers in modern times is of 'letting the side down'. Watch those

who have lost; very often they will hang their heads in the chests of their coaches or look toward friends and family in the crowd with a look of 'shame'. It is sad to see but all too familiar. Our self-protection system responds to these social threats in the same way it responds to physical ones. Being ousted from the social circle and losing love, warmth and affection is as dangerous to survival as being hunted by a lion.

MOVING BEYOND 'SURVIVAL SYSTEMS'

Knowing that our reactions to loss may be a very natural protection process is all well and good, but how can we move forward and 'learn to lose' well?

TIP ONE: BJJ and Hemingway

The first step is best explained by a quote from the great Ernest Hemingway: "If something is wrong, fix it if you can. But train yourself not to worry. Worry never fixes anything".

This first tip on the path of 'learning to lose' is a vitally important one. Competitors are by nature competitive. Many are perfectionists and, for whatever reason, are relentlessly hard on themselves. The voice of our inner critic will not fail to rebuke mistakes whilst being more than slow coming with self-praise. This is a habit we must try and break for our own peace of mind.

The simple truth is this: you are who you are at this moment in time. If you could be different (fitter, faster, stronger longer), you would be. That fact that you aren't means, at the moment, you can't! So relax. Accept it. Stop fighting it. Be kind to yourself.

This isn't to say that we shouldn't strive to be better - of course we should; this is why we show up at the academy every week, but it is healthier to learn to accept our weaknesses and work with them positively rather than routinely chastising ourselves for not yet being 'something' or 'someone' we would rather be.

TIP TWO: Hunt the Silver Lining

In the face of a loss it is easy to get swept away in negative emotion where nothing feels positive. Friends, family and coaches may suggest you 'look on the bright side' but, right now, it is almost impossible to take this advice - certainly whilst you are still smarting from your loss. These are the steps to successfully following tip two:

- Be on your own for a little while - get away from the crowds.

- Grab a coffee, water, listen to music- whatever makes you feel a little calmer.

- After five minutes, with pen and paper, force yourself to find three positive things from your match and write these down.

Now, your inner critic may resist this effort at being positive. Don't let it. As a competitor you are used to adversity, so stop whining and force yourself to find three positive things from your match. This gets easier with practise, but you must practise.

TIP THREE: Tipping the Table

The first two tips have hopefully helped you to be a little easier on yourself and move you out of a 'negative funk' into a more amicable state of mind. This next tip deals with the learning experience of losing; after all, this is what we are after, learning from our losses.

At the start of this article we spoke of the fundamental fears surrounding a loss: the fears that create stress and, ultimately and perversely, cause us to under perform! Let's review:

- Fear that we are in 'real danger' (Maslow's first level of needs).

- Fear that we will lose our 'social bonds' (Maslow's third level of needs).

These beliefs lie at the heart of our stress and resistance to loss and it is helpful to change these beliefs. Beliefs are like a table. Held up by 'legs of evidence' that help us to confirm their validity. Unfortunately, many of our beliefs are held up with legs of evidence that may not be true or, at least, are distorted.

For example, as a child without developed levels of discernment, if you are regularly told that you are 'clumsy' when learning physical skills you may well grow up to believe this as truth. This belief could then determine your skill level - a self-fulfilling prophecy. As an adult, with developed levels of discernment, you may well observe that, although you struggle with

a new skill on the first few turns, this physical experimentation always leads to mastery a little further on. You may also realise that this teacher's 'insults' are incorrect and unhelpful and treat him to an RNC!

In short: our beliefs may not be correct. Now that you are an adult, challenge them. Cut the 'table legs'; those that are not helpful.

In regard to our fundamental fears then, ask yourself the following questions to get a more 'realistic' outlook on competition. Once you have the answers, spend time really considering them. The insights gained may well start to change your deep seated beliefs.

1. Is your life really in danger from losing a BJJ match?

2. Will your coach, friends and family abandon you if you lose?

TIP FOUR: 'Tap' Pollyanna

Pollyanna is a classic children's novel where the central character (Pollyanna) is eternally optimistic. The name has latterly been borrowed for a term called the 'Pollyanna principle'. It describes the tendency for people to remember the good, rather than the bad, in any given situation. Whilst tip two had us 'hunting for the silver lining', tip three, just as importantly, has us hunting for what we did badly!

As important as it is to be gentle with ourselves, understanding and positive, it does us no good to be a 'Pollyanna'. Blind optimism is as dangerous to our progression as searing negativity. The recognition of our errors and subsequent efforts to improve on them is the keystone to development.

Recognising the weaknesses in our game does not have to be a self-criticising personal attack but an honest and mature assessment of where we are in relation to where we would like to be. Buy yourself a notebook and make a habit of regularly recording the positive and negatives of your matches. Remember, be objective rather than subjective.

TIP FIVE: Desensitisation

Our final tip of five brings us to a very effective technique in 'learning to lose'. Desensitisation is the process of gradually submitting yourself to stresses so that you become accustomed to them and are no longer stressed by them! The great self development author, Susan Jeffers, explains it in the title of her book, *'Feel the fear, and do it anyway!'*

At London Zoo they have a program called the 'friendly spider program ', for those with arachnophobia. At first, patients are shown photos of spiders, and then they see one in a box, then out of a box until the climax; the patient holding a fully mature Tarantula!

The lesson for us as BJJ competitors is to compete more! Compete regularly. Compete gi. Compete nogi. Compete at your academy comps. Compete at local comps. Compete at IBJJF's. Just compete. A lot! Nothing will teach you to lose better than being in that situation again and again and again (obviously, do *try* and win if you can).

Of course, if after genuinely trying all of the above *tried and tested* tips you decide that you would rather find another way, there is one final option: train so hard, and get so good, that you never ever lose again!

Good luck with that…

MATT JARDINE IS A FULL TIME MARTIAL ARTS TEACHER, WRITER AND BJJ FANATIC TRYING TO LEARN TO SPELL BERIMBLOWO…

MASTERCLASS

RUBBER GUARD TO ARMBAR

1: You start on your back in closed guard with control of your opponent's collar and sleeve. **2:** Use your grips to pull your opponent towards you, forcing their right hand to the mat. **3/4:** Open your guard and control your left foot behind your opponent's head – you have now established the rubber guard. **5:** Control the top of your opponent's right lapel with your left hand, at the same time start to climb your right leg up and over their shoulder, locking your feet together. **6:** Shift your hips out to the left, helping to move your opponent's body to their left and isolate their right arm. **7/8:** Control your opponent's right arm with your left hand and simply extend their limb backwards to finish with an armbar.

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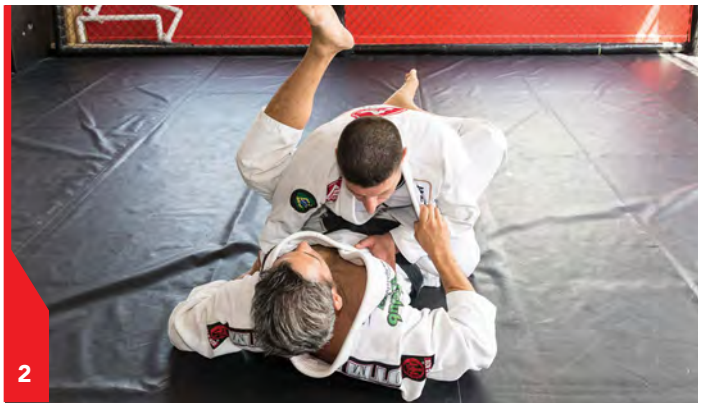
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OPEN GUARD WITH:
NINO SCHEMBRI

NINO SCHEMBRI IS WIDELY REGARDED AS ONE OF THE GREATEST OPEN GUARD PLAYERS IN THE HISTORY OF JIU JITSU. HAVING HONED HIS SKILLS DURING THE GOLDEN ERA AT GRACIE BARRA, NINO IS KNOWN FOR HIS INNOVATION OF THE RUBBER GUARD, LASSO GUARD AND HIS DYNAMIC OMOPLATA ATTACKS. AS WELL AS BEING CROWNED A MULTIPLE WORLD CHAMPION IN SPORT JIU JITSU, SCHEMBRI WAS ALSO A PRIDE FC STAR IN JAPAN, HAVING TWICE FACED THE LEGENDARY KAZUSHI SAKURABA (BECOMING THE FIRST JIU JITSU FIGHTER TO BEAT THE JAPANESE STAR).

IN THIS RENDITION OF MASTERCLASS, NINO SHOWCASES A NUMBER OF HIS FAVOURITE SWEEPS AND SUBMISSIONS FROM THE OPEN GUARD, INCLUDING A NUMBER OF OMOPLATA AND RUBBER GUARD ATTACKS.

BRAZILIAN JIU JITSU
Black Belt World Champion 1997
Black Belt World Champion 1998
Absolute Brazilian National Champion 1996

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS
Pro MMA record of 5 wins 5 losses
Six appearances in Pride FC, Japan
KO victory over Kazushi Sakuraba
Three armbar submission wins

RUBBER GUARD TO CHOKE

1: You start on your back in closed guard with control of your opponent's collar and sleeve. **2:** Use your grips to pull your opponent towards you, forcing their right hand to the mat. **3/4:** Open your guard and control your left foot behind your opponent's head – you have now established the rubber guard. **5:** Bring your forearm under your opponent's neck, resting your left hand on your right forearm. **6:** Pull your leg down tight with your right hand and drive your left forearm into your opponent's neck to finish the choke.

CRUCIFIX TO REVERSE OMOPLATA

1: You have reached a dominant position at the side of your opponent who has turtled-up. **2/3:** Bring your right foot forward and drag your opponent's right arm backwards between your legs. **4:** From here, you can often finish with a straight armbar or Americana. **5:** If your opponent defends the straight armbar, push your right leg backwards so that your opponent's arm is hooked behind your left leg. **6/7/8/9:** With complete control of your opponent's right arm, switch your body towards your right, rolling over your left shoulder. Your opponent will be forced to roll with you, otherwise they will be submitted with the omoplata. **10:** As you complete the roll, make sure you gain control of your opponent's right leg. **11:** Next, switch your base and your grips so that your right arm is controlling your opponent's right leg and your torso is resting on their chest. **12:** Shuffle your butt backwards on the mat to finish the reverse omoplata.

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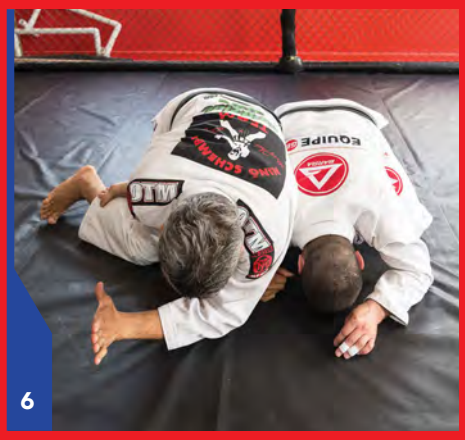
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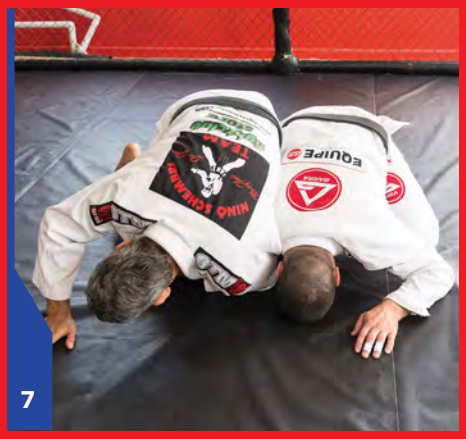
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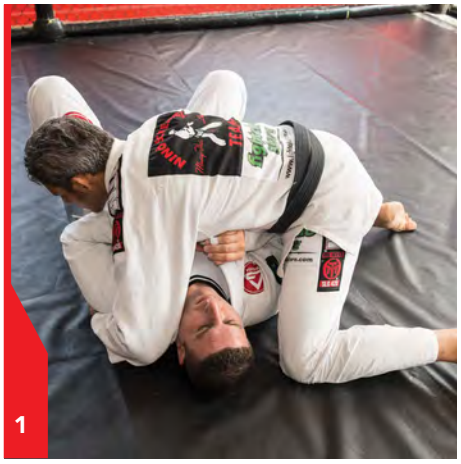
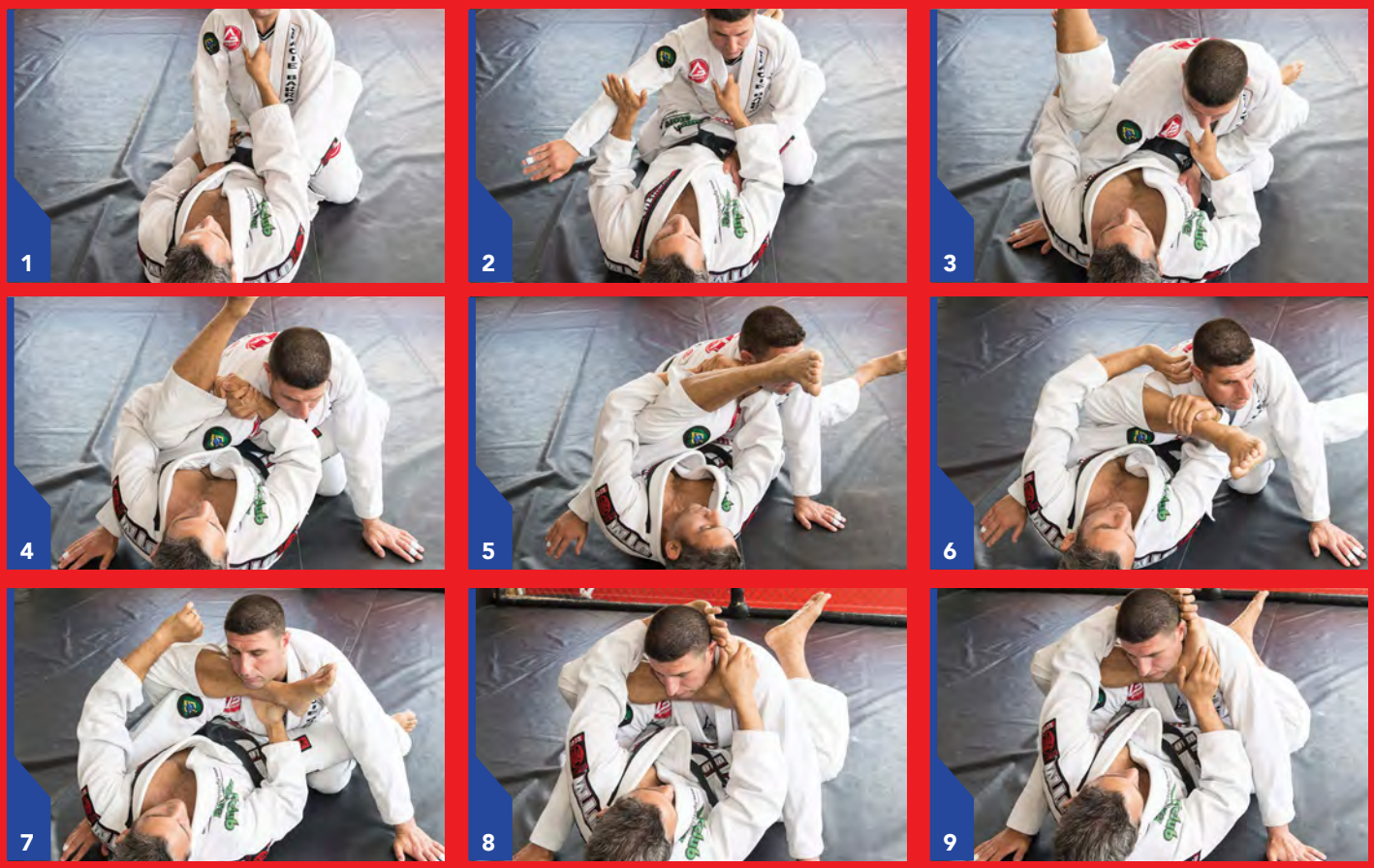


ROLLING OMOPLATA

1: Starting from side control. **2/3:** Bring your left knee underneath your opponent's left elbow to isolate the arm. Next, widen your base so that their right arm is separated from their body. **4:** Pinch your left elbow against your left thigh to secure your opponent's right arm in place. **5:** Posture up and bring your right knee up high on your opponent's chest. **6:** Next, place your right hand on the mat in front of you to create space. **7:** Sit back on the mat, making sure you keep your legs squeezing tightly together to keep your opponent's arm in place. **8/9:** As you fall backwards, throw your left leg over your opponent's arm to secure the omoplata position. **10/11:** Continue to move forwards and onto your knees to finish the submission.**12:** If your opponent rolls, finish the omoplata from the top position.

GOGOPLATA

1: You are on your back in closed guard with control of your opponent's right lapel. **2/3/4:** Bring your left arm on the inside of your opponent's right arm, at the same time open your guard so that you can hug your left leg with both hands, trapping their right arm and making them vulnerable for attacks. **5:** Pull your hands down, move your hip and apply pressure with your left leg to force your opponent's body to turn to their left. **6:** Bring your left leg in front of your opponent's shin and grab it with your right hand. **7:** Often your opponent will try to bring their weight back towards the right, which can result with your shin being pressed across their chin. **8:** Bring your left hand around the back of your opponent's neck and control your own toes. **9:** Pull down with your left hand and push your heel upwards with your right hand to apply the choke.



ARMBAR FROM SIDE CONTROL

1: Starting from side control. **2/3/4:** Bring your left knee underneath your opponent's left elbow to isolate the arm. Next, widen your base so that their right arm is separated from their body. **5:** Pinch your left elbow against your left thigh to secure your opponent's right arm in place. **6:** Posture up and bring your right knee up high on your opponent's chest. **7/8/9:** Bring all your weight onto your opponent and drive through your right knee. Finally, cross your left foot over your opponent's head to secure a very tight armbar.

MODIFIED GOGOPLATA

1: You are on your back in closed guard with control of your opponent's right lapel. **2/3/4:** Bring your left arm on the inside of your opponent's right arm, at the same time open your guard so that you can hug your left leg with both hands, trapping their right arm and making them vulnerable for attacks. **5:** Pull your hands down, move your hip and apply pressure with your left leg to force your opponent's body to turn to their left. **6:** Bring your left leg in front of your opponent's shin and grab it with your right hand. **7:** Often your opponent will try to bring their weight back towards the right, which can result with your shin being pressed across their chin. **8/9:** Next, control your opponent's left arm, bringing your right knee up and cross their bicep. **10/11/12:** In a quick movement, bring your right leg all the way through and swing it in front of your opponent's face. By extending your hips upwards you will now finish with a modified gogoplata.

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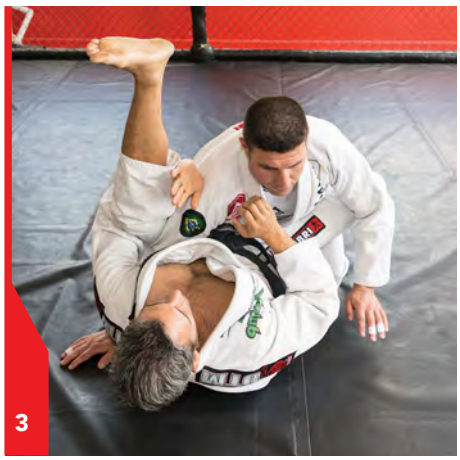
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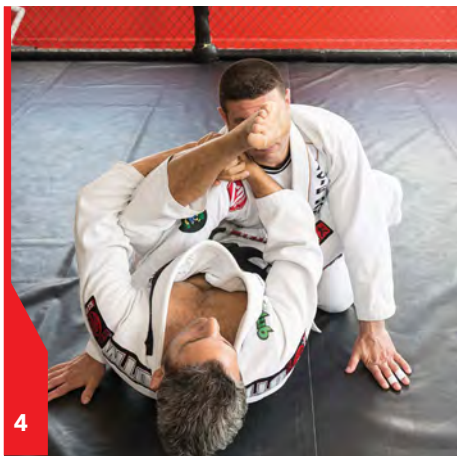
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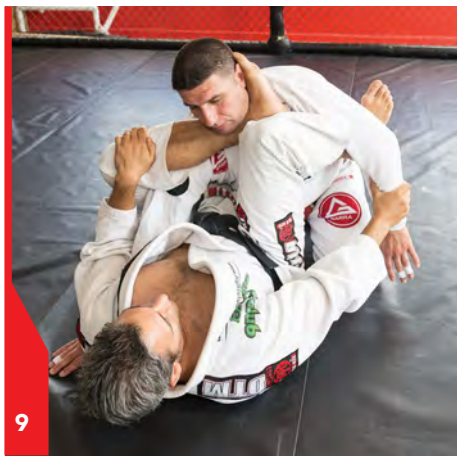
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ASK THE DOCTOR

Braulio Estima is Jiu Jitsu Style's resident BJJ Doctor, helping prescribe our readers just the right tonic of tips to improve their grappling game.

Hi Braulio,
It seems submission only events are the hot topic at the moment, and everyone seems to want to fight that format. As someone who runs successful competitions under IBJJF rules, do you think there would be a benefit from offering submission only events? Also, do you think fighting submission only formats can help you develop as a fighter?

Cheers - *Tom*

Hi Tom,
Good question. I guess the biggest problem is the logistics of running a submission only competition. I would imagine there would be many matches at the lower belts that just run for hours, because the students wouldn't have the knowledge to finish submissions – it would become about the size of the gas tank.

I would also suggest that when you are at the lower belts, there are many benefits of being conditioned to work towards dominant positions, which is essentially what the point system encourages. Submission only events could lead to lower belts trying to create shortcuts and forgetting about the importance of reaching dominant positions.

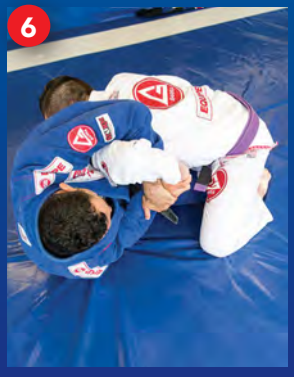
KIMURA FROM HALF GUARD

Hi Braulio,
I find that I can lock a kimura grip off pretty successfully when on the bottom in guard or half guard, but then struggle to finish it – would you mind showing how you like to finish the sub?

Cheers - Ronnie

Hi Ronnie,
I find this grip very successful. If you think about a snake, what happens when you control their head? You have total control of their movements. But, if you had control of their neck, they can still move freely. I think this is the same with an opponent's hand.

1: Starting in half guard. 2: Grip your opponent's left hand as pictured. This grip may feel unfamiliar when attacking a kimura, but go with it. 3/4/5: Reach over your opponent's left shoulder with your left arm and lock-off the kimura grip, making sure your right hand maintains control of your opponent's left hand. GRIP DETAIL 6/7/8: By maintaining control of your opponent's left hand during the whole process, they will not be able to hide their arm at any stage. Try this out with a friend, as I guarantee you they will find it very difficult to defend the kimura when you sit back and finish if you control their hand during the process.



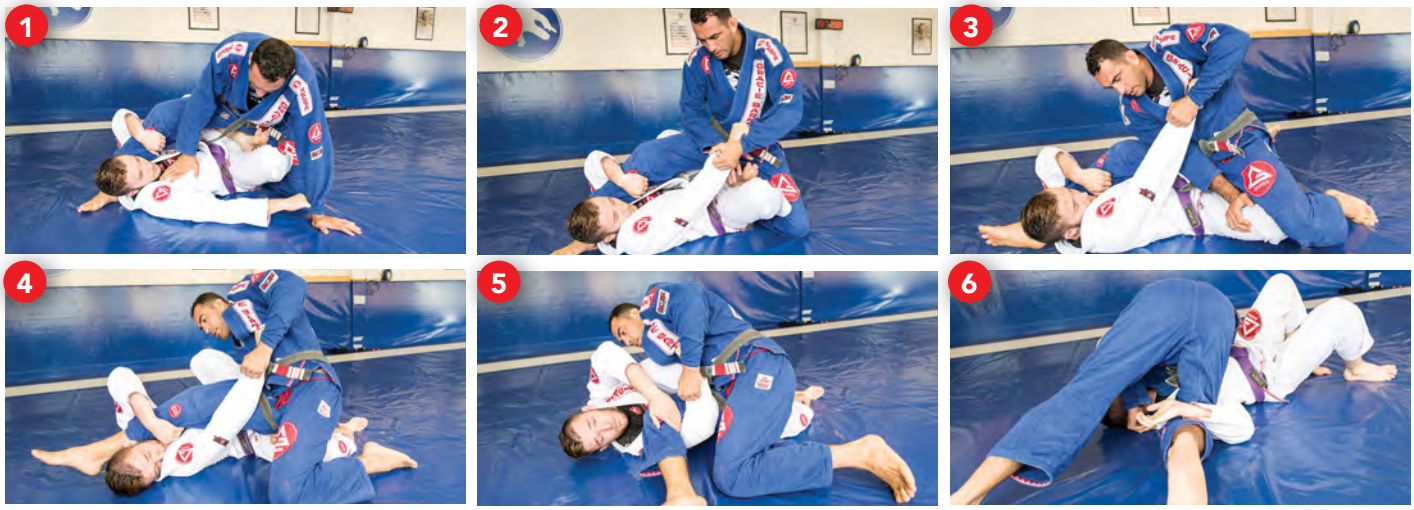
PASSING X-GUARD

HI Braulio,
I really (really) struggle to pass x-guard. If my opponent gets into the position, I struggle to mount any type of escape. Do you have any details you like to do to either prevent someone getting to x-guard, or sweeping once they do get there?

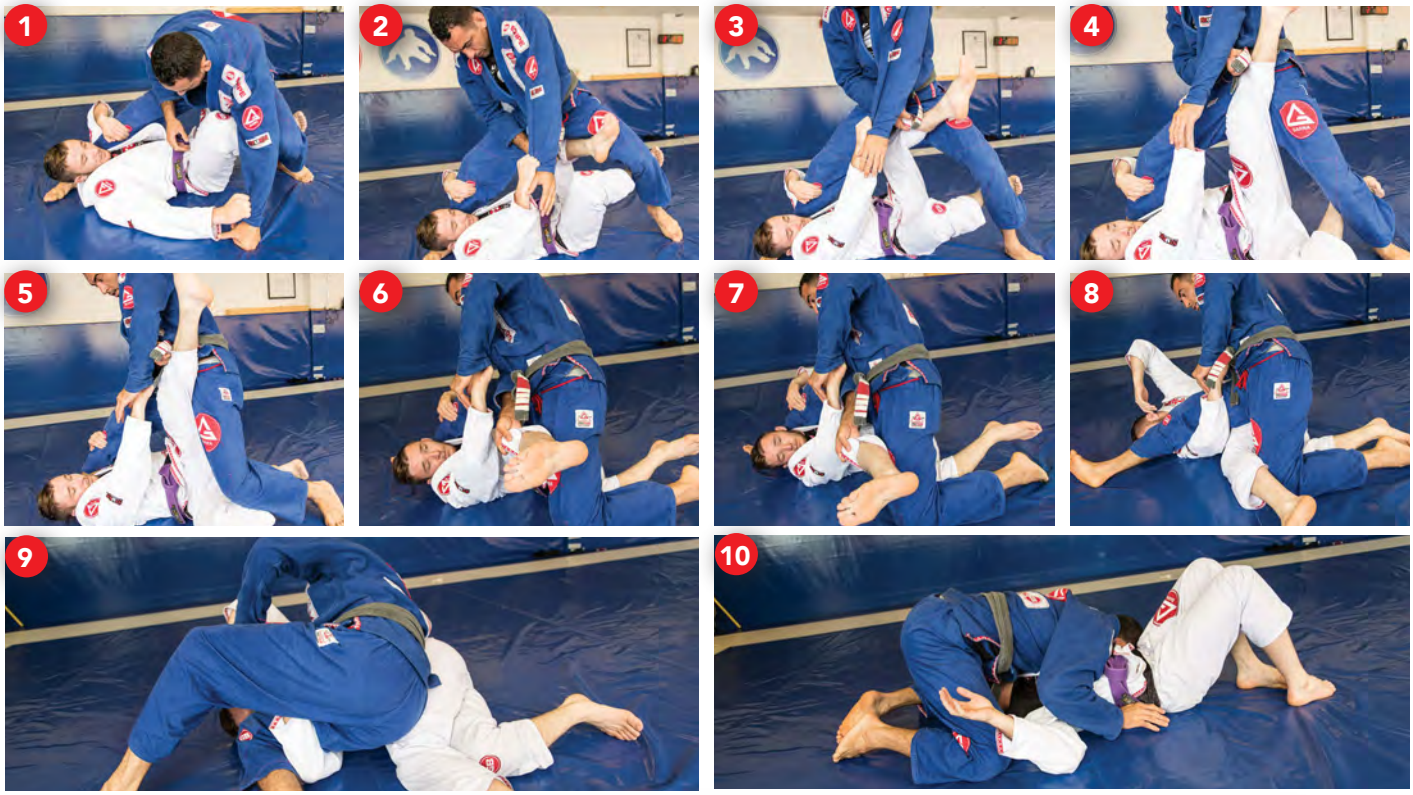
- John

Hi John,
Here are two variations for you.

PASS ONE 1: Your opponent has the x-guard and your back knee is on the floor. 2: First of all, gain control of your opponent's right arm with your left hand. 3: As you pull your opponent's left sleeve up, push their right knee to the mat with your right hand. At the same time, sink your hips low and widen your base. 4/5: Once you've neutralised your opponent's guard, bring your right leg in front of your opponent's face. 6: Arrive in side control.



PASS TWO 1: Your opponent has the x-guard and you are stood up on both feet. 2: Widen your base and control your opponent's right knee with your right hand. 3/4/5: Stand up tall and at the same time pull your opponent's right leg out and in front of your hips. 6/7: In a quick motion, lower your base and drop all your weight over your opponent's right leg, twisting their body. 8/9/10: Slide your right leg in front of your opponent's face and establish side control.



Hi Braulio,
Random question, but how long do you see yourself pursuing your competitive career? You keep on winning world titles and getting great results despite all the youngsters coming through, but I wondered if you had an exit plan? I'm pushing 40 now and thinking that maybe I've missed my cue to retire the competition gi!

- Stephen

Hi Stephen,
I think I'm the oldest guy to win an adult black belt world title now, and there are a number of reasons I think I've been successful late in my career. I built my base as an instructor early, and now I have a well-established academy. Lots of guys probably just trained non-stop in their younger years and now they have to work on their academy or family life, which can come as a shock if you are only used to training like a mad man. There are plenty of difficulties when building an academy, but I've managed to go through that while competing, and now I don't have to worry about this anymore.

Nowadays it's more about injuries becoming an issue, but as long as I feel 100% fit and sharp, I will compete. You have to feel happy to carry on competing, and you must have the support from people around you. At the moment I've got a few injuries and I'm concentrating on my family, but we will see how it goes for me going forward.

Hi Braulio,
With Rickson's new federation forming, it got me thinking a little about the current state of BJJ. Do you think there should be more emphasis on self defence and that people concentrate on the competition game too much? On that note, do you think scrapping advantages (as Rickson intends) is a positive step forward?

Thanks - Mike

Hi Mike,
Let's look at my club as a reference, because I teach what I believe. We have a self-defence class as part of the fundamentals program, but I honestly think that if you want to avoid a fight, you'd better run. If you are trying to fight two people, there's no Thai boxing or Krav Maga that will help you in that situation. You'd be better as a sprinter!

For me, on a fundamental level, all jiu jitsu gives you is a fighting mentality that will make you become accustomed to certain situations that would be totally new to untrained people. If someone punches you in the head from behind, what can anyone do? If someone grabs you from behind, I'm pretty sure a guy who does sport jiu jitsu will remain calmer and have more skills to protect themselves than someone who doesn't train.

I think if you train jiu jitsu and do lots of sparring, you are going to condition yourself for a fight, you are going to get used to people trying to rip your arms off and choke you out – this fighting mentality can only help when it comes to a street fight.

When it comes to advantages at competitions, I think people have been trying for years to find the perfect set of rules. The fact is, it's very hard to get things exactly right. If we enforced the philosophy of Carlos and Helio Gracie, people would have to fight all day, so I think it's impossible to run a competition under the extreme, traditional setting.

At the end of the day, I think the Jiu Jitsu Global Federation is another great thing for jiu jitsu, and I don't see why federations have to be rivals. Everyone has their own value to add: I like the way Copa Podio do things, I like the way Metamoris do things and I like the way the IBJJF do things – they all make jiu jitsu better and I'm sure it will be the same with Rickson's federation. This variety will help fighters develop different skills and progress.

Hi Braulio,
Naming no names, but I saw a guy online I used to train with get his black belt not long ago, when he'd only been a brown belt for a year. Are you worried at all that the time frame we spend at each belt is becoming shorter and shorter – ultimately leading to the standard of BJJ dropping? I've been a purple belt for two years now, but am in no rush to get my brown!

Yours - Andre

Hi Andre,
I obviously can't speak about your friend, but I think the more the sport grows, the less quality control we are going to be able to enforce. People will tend to use their black belt for many different reasons, including as a business or to start creating a tribe of their own.

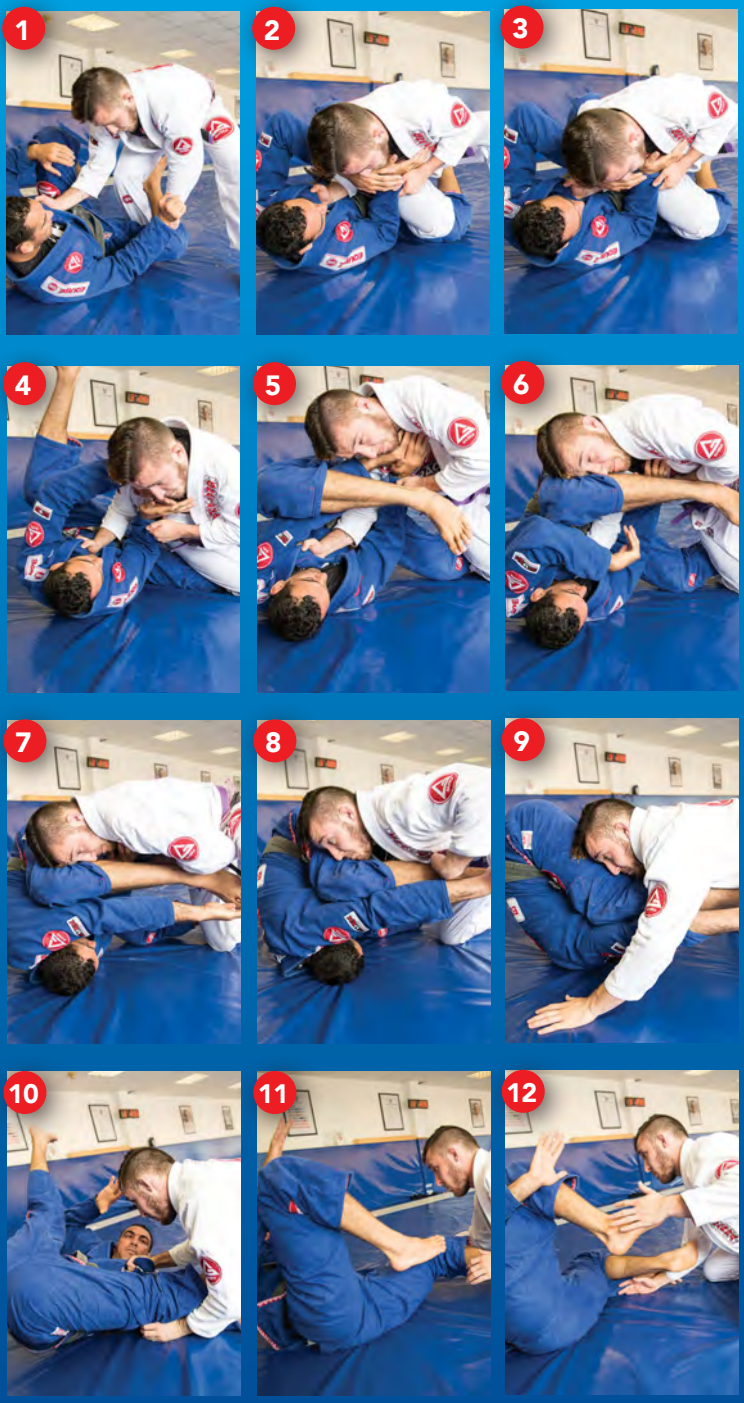
This is why I would say it's important that you can back track your lineage and rest assured you are going through a credible path. If you are training under a guy who frantically went about getting his black belt to satisfy a business need, and sadly it happens, your knowledge will be diluted knowledge.

However, I do believe that because of the information available to us now, and the more efficient training mentalities we have in place, knowledge can be picked up and passed on quicker than it used to be back when I started in Brazil. When I first started, there was no half guard, let alone 50/50 and berimbolo.

I personally took 7½ years to get my black belt, and that was training every day. It was also considered fast at the time. I actually wasn't at brown belt for that long either, so in my opinion it is the time it takes to get from white to black belt that is most important.

I believe as long as you have good people around you with a strong lineage, you can't go far wrong, but sadly the sport will continue to become diluted. I believe one day we will see people getting their black belts in two years. Jiu jitsu is still so young that we have direct contact with people from the source, literally the son of the creator! So, we can all do our research and make sure we are learning under someone viable.

INVERTING FROM GUARD



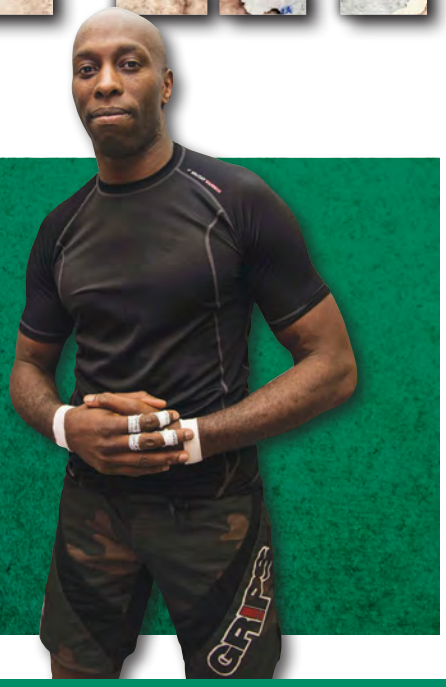
Hi Braulio,
Do you ever invert to prevent a guard pass? If so, can you show how/when you like to do this? It seems like a solid guard retention technique, so best I start learning, haha.

Best wishes - *Harriet*

Hi Harriet
I find the knee-slice pass is quite a common way for people to pass these days, so here's how to prevent it with inverting.

1/2: Your opponent has set up their grips and started to knee-slice pass. You are in a bad spot here, and in danger of losing position. 3: Create a frame on your opponent's shoulder and head. 4/5: Push backwards with your frame, creating enough space for your left leg to come in front of your opponent's face. 6/7/8/9: As your opponent attempts to drive their weight into your legs, use the momentum to roll over your shoulders and neck. Be careful with this position, as it will require a certain level of flexibility. 10/11/12: Continue to roll through onto your left shoulder and hip, re-establishing your guard and preventing the pass.

BJJ 4 MMA

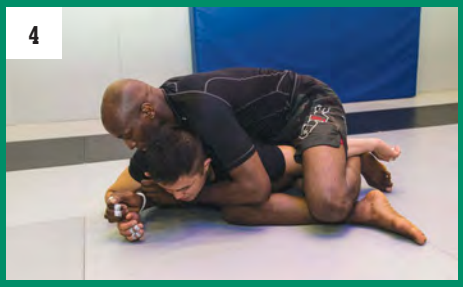


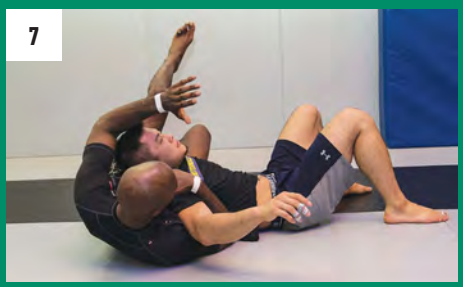
JUDE SAMUEL

Showcasing some of his favourite nogi techniques that transition well into MMA is long-time friend of the magazine – Jude Samuel! Jude is the Head of Talent for the British Association of Mixed Martial Arts and one of the UK's first black belts, having graduated under Mauricio Gomes. Here, Jude outlines some effective submissions to work on once you have passed your opponent's guard.

CRUCIFIX TO SHORT CHOKE

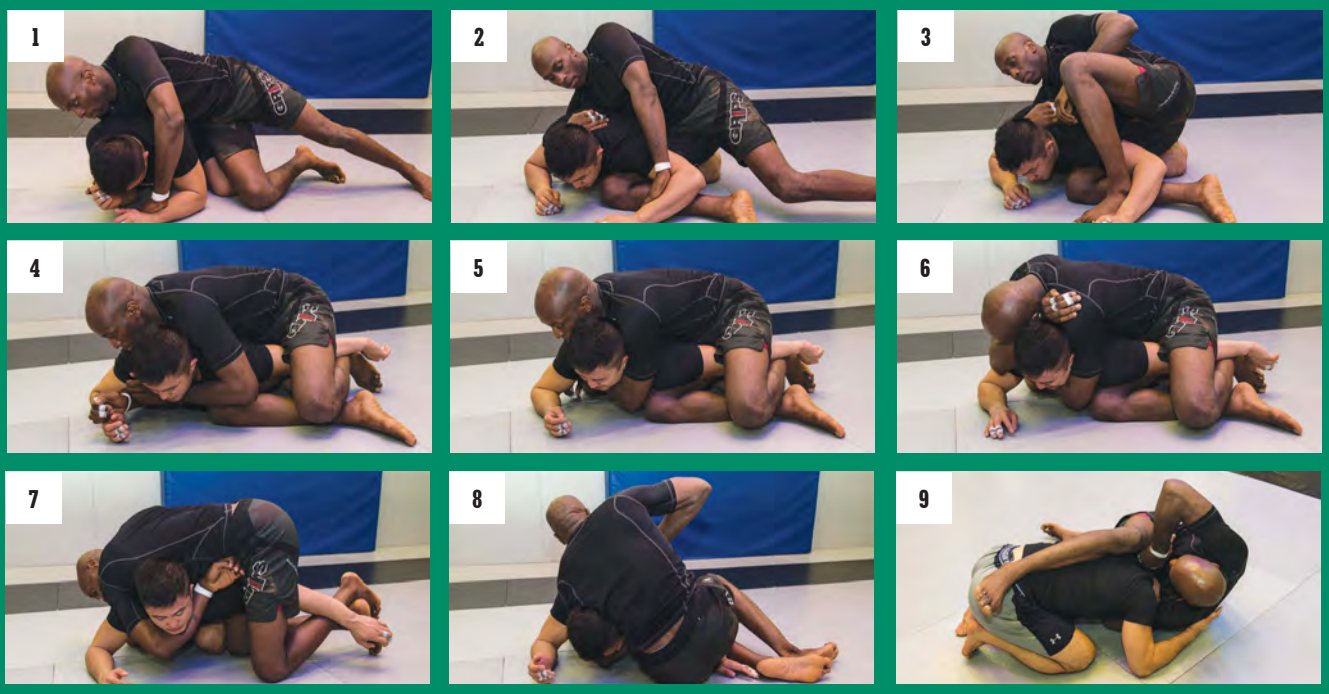
1: Your opponent is in turtle position, and you have gained control of their left arm. 2: Drive your right knee underneath your opponent's left armpit; at the same time establish an underhook on your opponent's right shoulder with your right hand. 3/4: Bring your left foot in front of your opponent's left hand, dragging it backwards to isolate the limb and establish a crucifix. 5/6/7: Roll over your right shoulder, this will force your opponent to roll as well and end up with you with your back on the mat. 8: Maintain your crucifix, at the same time drive your left forearm underneath your opponent's chin. 9: Base-out on your right elbow, at the same time secure a gable grip and squeeze for the submission. This position will also put lots of pressure on your opponent's neck, often leading to a tap.





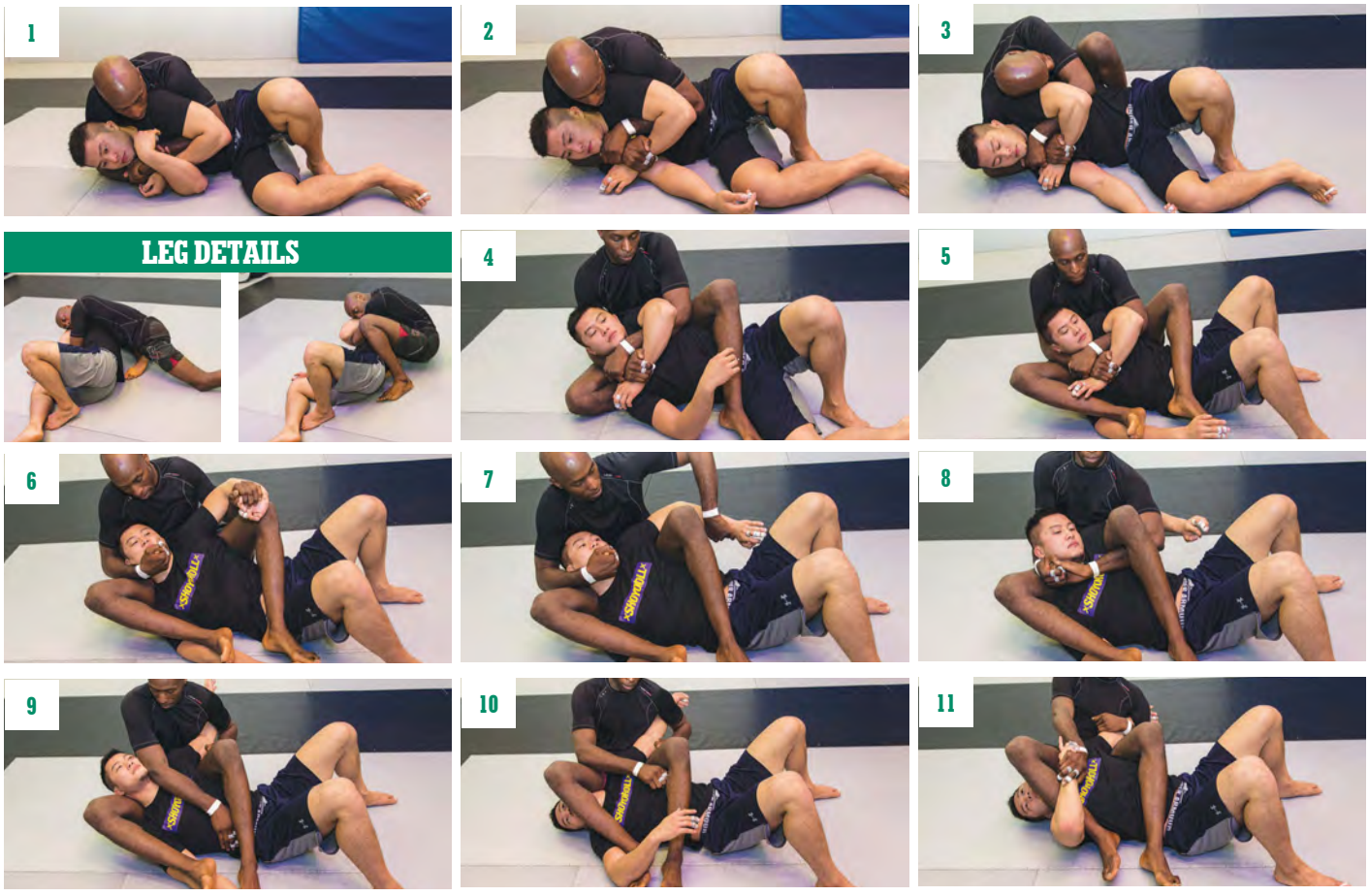
REAR NAKED CHOKE AND GUILLOTINE FROM TURTLE

1: Your opponent is in turtle position, and you have gained control of their left arm. 2: Drive your right knee underneath your opponent's left armpit; at the same time establish an underhook on your opponent's right shoulder with your right hand. 3/4: Bring your left foot in front of your opponent's left hand, dragging it backwards to isolate the limb and establish a crucifix. 5/6: Lock your left arm under your opponent's neck and secure a rear naked choke. 7: Alternatively, you can finish with a guillotine. Start by switching your base and bringing your left shoulder over the back of your opponent's back, securing their neck with your left arm. 8: Drop your hips to the mat and secure a guillotine grip around your opponent's neck. 9: Drop your left elbow towards your hip while keeping your armpit tight over your opponent's neck to finish the guillotine.



BACK CONTROL ATTACKS

1: You have passed your opponent's guard and secured over/under control. 2: Isolate your opponent's left arm. 3: Drive your opponent's left shoulder forwards and adjust your legs behind their back. 4/5: Bring your legs in front of your opponent's body. 6/7: Cup your opponent's chin with your right hand and loop your left arm over your opponent's left arm. 8: You can now adjust your hand grips and finish with a neck crank. 9/10: Alternatively, adjust your legs and maintain a tight control of your opponent's left arm under your left armpit. 11: Sit back to finish the armlock, controlling your opponent's right arm with your hand if possible.



SHEDDING THE GI

CAIO TERRA

Shedding the Gi inside the latest issue of JJS is none other than our cover star, Caio Terra! Caio is an incredible five time IBJJF Nogi World Champion and one of the most diverse competitors in sport jiu jitsu.

Here, Caio showcases some of his favourite ways to escape from the omoplata position.

OMOPLATA ESCAPE

1/2: You are in your opponent's guard and they have managed to isolate one of your arms, attacking with an omoplata. **3/4:** As soon as you feel your arm is under attack, base-out wide with your right foot on the mat and bring your left knee up and onto your opponent's stomach. **5:** Once you have prevented the initial attack, start to circle towards your opponent's feet and lift their hips off the mat with your right arm. **6/7:** Posture up and start to change the angle of your arm, preventing your opponent from being able to maintain the omoplata. **8:** Back out of the position and re-compose yourself before looking to pass your opponent's guard.

OMOPLATA ESCAPE TO ARMLOCK

1: Your opponent has isolated your arm and is attacking with an omoplata. **2:** As you attempt to bring your right knee onto your opponent's chest, they hug your thigh with their left arm. **3/4:** Base out with your left foot, at the same time push your right knee down to the mat. Make sure you control your opponent's left elbow with your left arm. **5:** Maintaining your grips, start to invert and roll over your right shoulder. **6/7/8:** As you invert, your opponent will attempt to sit up. Maintain your grips with your arms and drive your left foot under your opponent's armpit. **9/10:** Use your legs to push your opponent's back towards the mat. You can also push on their legs with your right hand, but make sure you maintain control of their left arm with your left arm.**11/12:** Squeeze your knees together and finish the armlock.

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OMOPLATA ESCAPE TO COUNTER

1/2/3: Your opponent has isolated your arm and is attacking with an omoplata. **4/5:** This time, as you bring your knee up and onto your opponent's chest, they successfully push it off. **6:** Your opponent manages to hug your midsection with their right arm and you are in danger of being submitted. **7:** As your opponent looks to sit up and finish the submission, control their right wrist with your right hand. **8/9/10:** Keeping control of your opponent's right wrist, roll over your left shoulder to counter with your own omoplata attack. **11/12:** Kick your legs forward and sit up to apply your submission.

TECHNIQUE

SIT UP GUARD WITH NICK BROOKS

SWEEP ONE

1: You have established the sit up guard position, with your left arm wrapped around your opponent's right leg. **2:** Trap your opponent's right ankle with the back of your right knee and circle towards your left, posting your right hand on the floor. **3:** Push your hip forwards, let go of your lapel grip and grab the front of your opponent's shin with your left hand. **4/5:** Keep driving your body forwards to force your opponent forwards. **6:** Posture up and control your opponent's back to finish the sweep.

SINGLE LEG TAKEDOWN

1: You have established the sit up guard position, with your left arm wrapped around your opponent's right leg. **2:** Trap your opponent's right ankle with the back of your right knee and circle towards your left, posting your right hand on the floor. **3:** Drive forwards with your shoulder to push your opponent's weight onto their front leg. **4/5:** As you drive forwards, your opponent's right leg will become very light, as their weight will be transferred to their left leg. Start to stand up; maintain your grips. **6:** When you have stood up with control of your opponent's leg, squeeze your knees together to keep tight control. Keep your head on their hip and both your arms controlling above and below their knee to set up your takedown.

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SIT UP GUARD CAN BE A VERY EFFECTIVE ATTACKING PLATFORM, AND IT CAN ALSO BE TRICKY TO NEUTRALISE IF YOU ARE LOOKING TO PASS. HERE ARE A COUPLE OF SWEEPS THAT I FIND WORK REALLY WELL, WHILE MY STUDENT, DANIEL STRAUSS, SHOWS HIS FAVOURITE WAYS TO COUNTER THE SIT UP GUARD.

GUARD PASS TO LOOP CHOKE

1: Your opponent is in sit up guard. **2:** You are unable to free your right leg and pass your opponent's guard, but you can set up a submission. Reach into your opponent's collar and get a cross grip with your right hand (palm up, not too deep). **3:** Control your opponent's right knee with your left hand. **4:** Pull your opponent's head forwards and under your armpit. Your forearm will now be underneath their throat, setting up the loop choke. **5:** Roll forwards and over your left shoulder, maintaining your grips. **6:** Pull both your arms towards you and bridge your hips to finish the submission.

GUARD PASS TO OMOPLATA

1: Your opponent is in sit up guard. **2:** Control your opponent's left sleeve with your left arm and grip behind their neck with your right arm. **3/4:** Lift your right heel to free your leg from your opponent's guard and circle around to your left. **5/6/7:** Roll forwards over your right shoulder, attacking with the omoplata. **8:** Once you land on your back, keep a solid grip on your opponent's left sleeve. **9/10:** Drive your legs to the floor and reach over your opponent's waist. **11:** Sit forwards to finish the submission.

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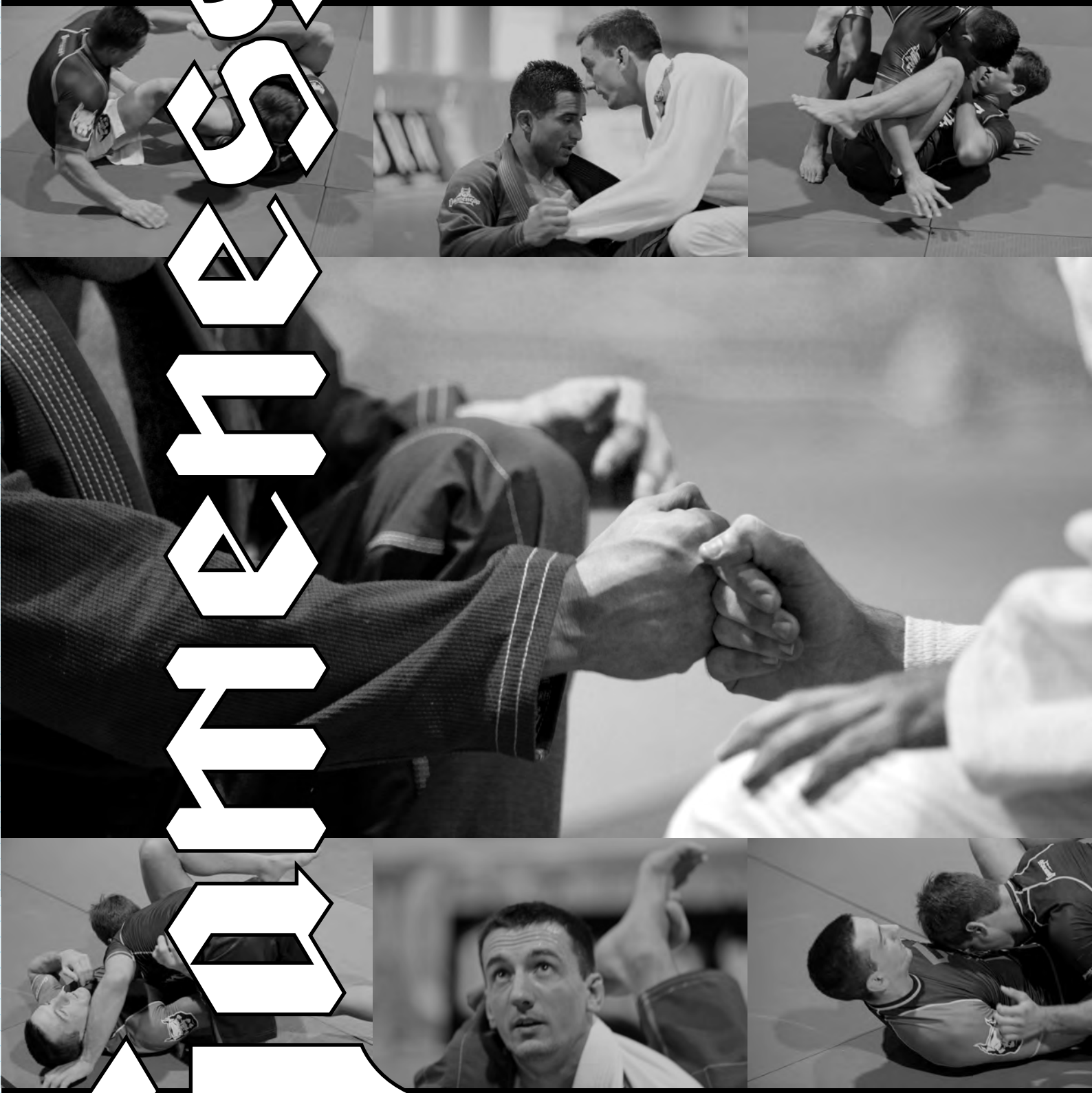

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RECOVERING FROM SURGERY

HANNAH GORMAN

In the last issue of Jiu Jitsu Style I recapped my ACL surgery from weeks 1-6. Whilst writing the article for this issue I am at week 14 and have some more progress to share.

Weeks 7-8

In week 7 I had a consultation with my surgeon to check everything over. He told me he was happy with the procedure, but he did mention that my cartilage had some small tears in it. However, he was confident that they wouldn't get any worse, and that they were a result of extra movement in my kneecap whilst I was training without an ACL. He also commented on how bendy my knees are. As soon as I was on the operating table he said he realised how much my knees hyperextend. He mentioned that the new graft was going to be tighter than the ACL on my other leg but that it would eventually stretch a little to try to match my other leg. Obviously too much stretch is an issue, but I've managed to do leg hangs so that both of my knees dip to the same degree already.

The main issue during this time was the sensation of something 'catching' inside my knee. The surgeon said it's likely to be scar tissue, and to avoid it catching I need to make sure I massage the scar in order to break down the scar tissue. At 8 weeks I was so close to full range of movement (I could pull my heel to within an inch or two of my butt). The most exciting news was that I did a small amount of jiu jitsu. A grip break from closed guard and breaking down my opponent's posture. It wasn't much, but it felt great to be part of the class again.

Weeks 9-10

During week 9 I achieved full range of movement (heel to butt). Despite being off from jiu jitsu, I was approached to become part of a team of athletes sponsored by Magni Power- a company that build custom made strength and conditioning equipment and by week 10 they had sent me some equipment to use. I've since incorporated the use of their macebell and paralettes into my workouts on a daily basis. It was nice to focus on building strength everywhere, instead of solely favouring my left leg!

During week 10, I definitely had some 'down days' as frustration had really set in. I felt like my life was 90% back to normal, apart from the fact that I could not do what I enjoyed doing the most. With all this time off the mat, I managed to tick something off my list of "things to do whilst recovering from surgery". I made a short video called 'Intro' which features the guys and girls at the club I train at. It can be found on my shebeastbjj YouTube channel if you want to check it out. I've also posted a short workout video showing a sample of the exercises I have been doing using the Magni Power equipment and my trusty kettlebells.

Weeks 11-12

In weeks 11 and 12 I had another visit to the physio who was starting to really closely watch my movement during my exercises. The catching sensation in my leg from weeks 7 and 8 was gone, and I wasn't experiencing any sudden sharp pains if I changed direction too suddenly when walking. I was feeling more mobile and agile on my feet, and during workouts I had been able to run on the spot bringing my knees up quite high, as well as doing 'jiu jitsu warm- up' style side stepping. The physio said that by the 4 month mark (16 weeks) I would be able to incorporate 'sports specific drills' into my exercises. My mind excitedly jumped to the idea of guard passing drills and sweeping, but first I needed to build back some mass. Yes, chicken leg was still an issue and a very annoying one at that. It's incredible how fast my leg wasted away and how slow it has been at rebuilding. I expressed my frustrations with not being able to single leg squat for long enough as my knee began to hurt before I could complete enough reps to feel any benefit in my quads. I was reminded that this was a particularly slow process and then was given some modifications I could use to ensure I was working on strengthening my weak leg.

Now full range of movement had been achieved, the next stage of recovery was to increase the mass and strength in my operated leg to match that of my other leg. More mass (due to strength training) will mean a stronger leg which will result in a more stable knee. A more stable knee means I'm less likely to have my knee injury re-occur. So until I have regained some mass and strength in my leg, I won't be back to my usual jiu jitsu self as any sudden basing out, twisting, or weight shifting onto my knee will likely damage my recovering ACL as I haven't got enough muscle there to contract and protect my knee. Weight training is imperative and since week 12 I have dedicated my workouts and diet to rebuilding my leg.

Weeks 13-14

Week 13 and 14 have shown further improvements in strength. Walking upstairs and turning on my foot does not tweak my knee or cause it to ache like it has in previous weeks. Kneeling for any length of time is still an issue, but despite this I have embraced the good weather by going out paddleboarding a couple of times (kneeling very briefly before jumping up to my feet!). Day to day ache is massively reduced and there are brief moments when I forget I have an injured knee. The highlight of my recovery so far was taking part in two jiu jitsu sessions in the same week. I can shrimp well enough to shrimp down the mat with everyone, and I took part in a class when we drilled chokes from closed guard and bottom half guard. I even managed to drill a side control choke which required kneeling a little and hip switching.

The second class I did focused on retaining back control, where I did the whole class apart from sparring. My team mates were awesome and very considerate of my knee the whole time, offering to switch sides and just drill on one side if it helped. I honestly can't explain how it felt to drill stuff again. It took lots of effort to avoid smiling like a creep throughout the classes. It was also the first time my gis have warranted a wash in ages! Haha!

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READY, SET, GOAL!

GOAL SETTING PRINCIPLES IN BJJ

The idea of goal setting is common in BJJ, and research in sport shows that it's a very valuable psychological skill. Setting yourself a target can give focus to your training and a boost to your motivation. Achieving the goals can add to your sense of self-confidence. This begs the question: If goal setting works so well, why don't more of us consistently achieve our jiu jitsu aims?

The principles of goal setting may seem straightforward. We are often encouraged to make our goals 'SMART' (or even 'SMARTER'). This can be a useful acronym for planning our objectives. There are variations in what it stands for but in general, our goals are more effective when they are specific, measurable, realistic, time-bound, evaluated and recorded.

Indeed Locke and Latham, the Godfathers of goal setting research, found that goals had more of an impact on performance when they specified exactly what was to be achieved in contrast to 'do your best' goals. The results of their experiments also suggested that moderately challenging goals were most beneficial. Too easy and the goals didn't provide a sense of achievement. Too hard and the participants gave up before they even started.

Let's imagine, for example, that you have set yourself the goal of winning the next national championships. Does this target pass the SMARTER test?

Is it specific? Yes it is. You haven't just said you want to perform well, which could be interpreted in a number of ways. You have clearly defined

"FOCUSING SOLELY ON AN OUTCOME GOAL CAN BE PROBLEMATIC, BECAUSE MEDALING IN A COMPETITION IS NOT FULLY WITHIN YOUR CONTROL"

what performing well means to you.

Is it measurable? Yes. It will be easy to gauge whether you have achieved your goal.

Is it realistic? Maybe. This is a little trickier to judge. It will depend on how your training goes, on your previous competition performances, whether you're fully fit, and the other competitors in your category. The goal may need some adjustment over time as more information becomes available to ensure that it is still realistic.

Is it time-bound? Yes. There is a deadline to this goal. You know when the tournament is taking place and how much time you have between now and then to work towards it.

Is it evaluated? Yes. You will be very likely to review your goal after the tournament and reflect on why you did or didn't achieve it.

Is it recorded? I hope so. Making a written record of your goals can help to foster commitment to them. Stating them publicly to family and friends can add an extra layer of motivation (But think carefully before doing this. For some, this just adds unnecessary pressure).

Even if your target checks all of these boxes, however, there are other factors that might undermine your goal attainment. In wanting to win the national championships, you have stated what you aim to achieve. But you also need to consider exactly how you will achieve it. If you really want to accomplish your goals you need to go beyond goal setting and figure out your action plan. Substantial goals are made up of hundreds or thousands of tiny actions on a monthly, weekly and daily basis. Goals like winning a major tournament do not happen with one heroic deed at some unspecified point in the future. They happen in the now. Ask yourself whether there is anything you can do right now to work towards your goal.

Long-term targets provide you with that initial motivation to get back to regular training, work on your cardio or clean up your diet. But sometimes that big goal seems a long way away and you start to doubt whether you can achieve it. When the going gets tough, it's those short-term goals focusing on actionable behaviours that will sustain your confidence and effort levels through the difficult periods.

It is also important to pay attention to the type of goals we set. The interplay between long-term goals and short-term action plans hints at the motivationally fragile nature of an objective such as winning. Focusing solely on an outcome goal like this can be problematic, because medaling in a competition is not fully within your control. There are so many factors that contribute to the final result of a tournament, and there may be nothing you can do about questionable refereeing or whether you get a bye in the first round. If we perceive that we have little influence in the outcome of a match, then we are much more likely to experience a dip in motivation and withdraw effort.

In a research study with swimmers, sport psychologist Dan Burton found that athletes who set exclusively 'outcome' goals were also more likely to experience debilitating pre-competition anxiety (because of this lack of controllability). In contrast, athletes who set a mixture of goals are less susceptible to the negative consequences of an outcome goal.

Outcome goals are not bad as such but it is more useful from a psychological and behavioural perspective to set performance and process goals in addition. Whereas outcome goals are usually judged relative to others, performance goals are about achieving a personal performance standard independent of other people. In some sports, performance goals might involve personal bests, like lifting a certain amount of weight or running the 400 meters in a particular time. In Brazilian jiu jitsu, it can be tough to set performance goals since BJJ necessarily involves direct interactions with your training partners or opponents.

We can easily set process goals in jiu jitsu however. These goals are about the technique and strategy necessary for performing well. They are about executing techniques efficiently, trying to add a new dimension to your game, developing your mental skills. They are about making good food choices, taking care of your injuries and making an effort to enjoy competing (whatever the outcome).

This is the stuff of effective action plans. Process goals detail the specific steps along the path to achieving the long-term outcome. They are also fully within our control therefore minimizing anxiety, and help to centre our attention on the process of performing. This ensures our focus is on the present moment rather than possible events in the future.

Dr Rebecca Hill is a Sport and Exercise Psychologist chartered by the British Psychological Society, and an Education Adviser at the University of Exeter.

She is a brown belt competitor under Professor Victor Estima and is a current European champion. Rebecca blogs about sport psychology and BJJ at www.rebeccalhill.com.

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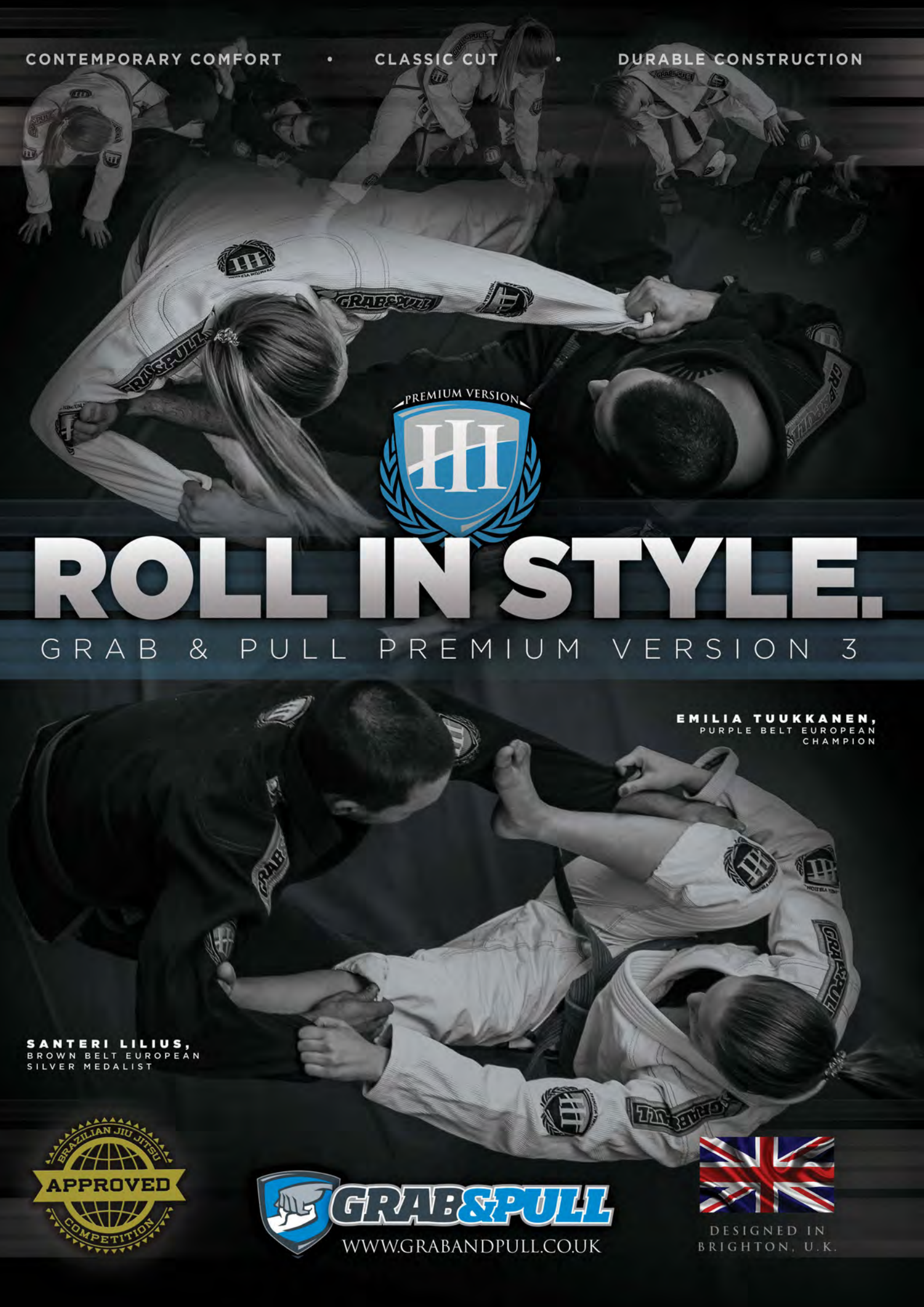
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OFF SEASON WEIGHT

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Well, not really, but I know that's what you want to hear…

Everyone wants a quick fix to help them make weight. Whether it be a new diet, a pill, or some kind of potion that magically drops fat while giving you super massive muscles and a berimbolo that would leave the Miyao Bros standing there like slack-jawed idiots.

The truth of the matter is that it takes continuous work to make sure that you perform at the very best in your weight class. If you really want to be the very best that you can be, you need to be working on everything all year round to make sure that you are the strongest, fastest and most technical fighter on the mat.

However, not all BJJ players want to be super competitive all year. Some want to do the odd competition just to test their skills and look at it as a lower priority in their training.

Neither approach is wrong, as everyone has different goals in BJJ and all are valid. However, BJJ is still a weight class sport and those looking to compete (no matter how often) need to keep an eye on their weight and manage it accordingly.

In the world of jiu jitsu, the year is split into two seasons, gi and nogi. Most people have a preference of which one they like to do and therefore lean their competitive season towards one or the other. This gives us an in-season (competitions) and an off-season (the rest of the year). What fighters need to start doing is to manage their weight in the off-season just as much as the in-season.

The first thing that you need to do is to pick your weight class. How to pick a weight class is another article in itself but you should go for one where the people are of a similar height, build and strength level. Once you have picked your weight class and competed, the question arises; what to do with your weight during the off-season?

The mistake that most fighters make is not to keep an eye on their weight during the off-season and let it balloon up due to a diet of junk. This is not acceptable to anyone who says they are dedicated to improving their BJJ. Everyone likes a treat or two, but spending months eating pizza and Doritos while playing Xbox will only improve the size of your waist.

Let's say that we have a fighter who competes at 70kg. In BJJ, events have same day weigh-ins and most are transitioning to weighing in fighters like the IBJJF (to stop massive weight cuts, fighters get weighed in then go straight to the bull pen to warm up to fight, with no chance to rehydrate or refuel). As most are now doing it this way it means that there are no long breaks between the weigh- in and fighting. This means that serious weight cutting or water manipulation is out of the question for BJJ athletes.

"WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR OFF-SEASON WEIGHT, IT IS OK FOR YOU TO LET IT CREEP UP A LITTLE. WHAT I MEAN BY A LITTLE IS 3-4KG"

All this means that any BJJ athlete must have a maximum weight that they let themselves hit before starting their competition prep. While everyone is different, a few factors must be taken into consideration, such as the fighter's ability to lose weight easily (if you do it easily you can have your weight a little higher in the off-season), how long you have off between competitions and the goals you have during your off-season.

A good off-season needs to be planned and you should have clear goals of what you want to achieve. Let's use an imaginary fighter as an example. He/she has had a pretty good season and won a few medals, however they know that there are a few gaps in their game that they need to work on. They sit down with their coach and come up with some clear goals for what they would like to achieve over the next few months.

This may look like this:

- ***Gain strength (divided up into smaller goals within this).***
- ***Improve flexibility in hips and hamstrings.***
- ***Work on techniques to implement into their game plan to address weaknesses (guard passing, side control, escapes etc).***

So here we can see that our fighter has some great goals to hit during the off-season, but what about their weight? How do their goals impact on their weight and what should it look like in the off-season?

When it comes to your off-season weight, it is ok for you to let it creep up a little. What I mean by a little is 3-4kg depending on how well you can lose weight or how long your training camps are for competition. If you are one of those competitors who competes regularly then you need to stay at your fighting weight throughout the year or season.

During the off-season you can let your weight creep up a little by adding good quality calories and nutrients. This will allow you to have the odd treat but still have strength and help your body recover from hard training.

As we are trying to promote muscle growth without too much fat gain, we should be keeping protein high (a minimum of 1.25g per pound of body weight) and keeping carbs slightly limited, but more importantly, timed to certain parts of the day. Carbs have gotten a lot of attention over the last few years - and a pretty bad rap. Everyone is suggesting different things. If you haven't tried one of the gazillion methods out there, then I advise taking in 0.75g per pound of body weight and adjusting them from there. I like fighters to have about 30 – 40% of their carbs at breakfast and the rest around their training (before, during, after). People are either taking in too many carbs or not enough. I would err on the side of caution though, it's always more fun to add in more carbs than take them out. The rest of your plan should focus on good healthy fats that will aid with joint health, hormone production, organ and immune support, fat loss and a load of other goodies (hint, get a good quality fish oil). Don't fear fat.

So how are we going to measure progress while in our off-season? The first point of call should be your coach. Tell them what you are doing and the goals you are trying to achieve. This way they can keep you on the right track. Nutrition wise

we are focusing on good, clean gains. Changing our body's composition (better muscle to fat ratio) should always be the goal. Remember, this isn't bodybuilding and we aren't bulking.

We want to add muscle that will be beneficial to us in competition but we don't want to get sloppy and stray too far from our fighting weight. It is possible to get stronger without adding weight but to be honest, most could do with a few more pounds of muscle. This is why your coach is important. While you think that you are getting 'swole', they will know if your performance is declining or improving. If it is improving, great. If not, look at your weight and see how fast you are gaining. Any more than 1-2 pounds every 4 weeks? Scale back the calories and re-assess. Weight staying the same or decreasing too far away from your weight class? Add in 100-200 calories and reassess in 4 weeks.

Nutrition in your off-season is just like your nutrition in-season. You want to make small, calculated adjustments so that you keep moving towards your goal. Make one change at a time and monitor it for a few weeks so that you can see what is working for you and what isn't. Confused by what you are seeing? Speak to your coach or chat with a professional.

Now you have read about a few things that can make a great off-season, so what next? As stated, discuss it with your coach and someone who knows nutrition. Personally I would set up a mini trial with a few goals in mind (improved lifts, better muscle – fat ratio etc) for about 8-12 weeks and give it a go. See what works for you and see what doesn't. Remember the idea is to improve yourself as a fighter; if it's not working don't do it. However, if this is something that you love (you're reading this, so I know it is) why not take some time to be better? Train and eat smart and great results can only follow.

Stay Healthy,

Mike

FIT 2 FIGHT

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN CHOOSING A GYM

WITH ANDY MARSHALL

MOST PUBLIC GYMS SUCK THESE DAYS, AND I BELIEVE THAT PICKING THE GYM YOU'RE GOING TO TRAIN AT IS VERY IMPORTANT. IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE A STATE OF THE ART SCIENCE LAB, BUT IT SHOULD HAVE SOME VERY SPECIFIC THINGS. BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS ARE GOOD COACHES AND A GOOD ATMOSPHERE WITHIN THE GYM, THEN NEXT IS THE GYM ITSELF. HERE IS WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

VILLAIN BARBELL CLUB ESTD. 2012

THE BASICS

POWER RACK
If your gym doesn't have a power rack, it's not a gym; leave now. This is the cornerstone of any weight room and you need one to squat, press, pull, chin, do band work and hang rings etc.

BARBELLS
This is a must. Dumbbells & kettlebells are a luxury. Barbells are essential if you want to get strong enough to wrestle a bear. A crappy bar, however, will ruin your wrists, elbows and shoulders, so it's always worth checking the quality of the bars in a gym. If you have a standard gym bar it's almost not even worth doing Olympic lifts, and if you have ever used a Texas power bar for your compound lifts nothing else will ever do.

PLATES
To load the bars, obviously. Bumper plates are great to have as well because ideally you always want to drop the bar on deadlifts and Olympic lifts. That's tough to do with regular plates.

CHALK
If your gym doesn't allow chalk, it's not a gym. You can't train heavy without chalk. It's not safe.

DIP & PULL-UP BARS
If you have a good rack, its more than likely it will have dip and pull-up bars. These will always be your bread and butter bodyweight exercises; attack them hard and often.

BANDS
For reverse band work, terminal knee extensions and band leg curls to warm up before squats, x-band walks, band assisted chins and dips, open-the-knees squat drills, and to replace cable exercises such as pushdowns, face pulls, Pallof presses etc. Bands are great if you don't have access to a cable column.

NEXT LEVEL

TRAP BAR WITH LOW AND HIGH HANDLES
Straight bar deadlifts from the floor are very hard on some people, simply because they can't do them with a neutral spine. So I like the trap bar as a starting point. This will allow you to do deadlifts more frequently while sparing your lower back. They can also be used to do farmer's walks.

SLED
For lower body hypertrophy, conditioning, speed and strength. It's eccentric-less so nothing compares to or replaces it.

BOX SQUAT BOX
An excellent tool for learning how to squat, plus many people find that box squats are easier to recover from and beat them up less than free squats. Even if this is not true for you, I still think a box squat is a good exercise to keep in your rotation.

BOARD PRESS BOARDS
Two and three boards allow you to train the triceps heavy without beating up your shoulders in the bottom range.

DUMBBELLS
For presses, rows, single leg work, curls, snatches etc. Ideally your dumbbells should be about 1.75 inches in diameter. Anything smaller than that is a waste of time. For pressing 2-2.5 inches is even better. If I were ordering just one set I'd go for 1.75 and just put *Fat Gripz* on for pressing.

PLYO BOXES
As you age you lose the ability to perform explosive contractions. And as you lose the ability to perform explosive contractions you age faster and feel worse. Explosive exercises are typically jumps, throws or Olympic lifts. Olympic lifts take a great deal of skill and can beat you up if your technique isn't on point or if you have any wrist, elbow or shoulder issues. Even some medicine ball throws can bother some people with shoulder problems. That's why box jumps are always in my programs. Anyone can do a jump onto box, that's the go-to explosive power exercise and this is an excellent tool to have.

RINGS
For isometric holds, chins, dips, pushups and inverted rows. Rings are a great tool.

GLUTE-HAM RAISE
To bring up the hamstrings without over working your lower back.

45 DEGREE BACK RAISE
Great posterior chain movement that hits the lower back, hamstrings and glutes hard, but doesn't cause any spinal compression or CNS stress.

CHAINS
This can make exercises like presses a lot safer by overloading the top portion and de-loading at the bottom where it's most stressful to the shoulders on a press. There are tons of cool variations of chain exercises. You can also use chains in place of a weighted vest or dip belt on exercises like pushups, chinups and dips.

POWER WHEEL
Ab rollouts are one of the absolute best ab exercises you can do - awesome for shoulder stability and core strength.

NOT ESSENTIAL BUT GREAT TO HAVE

CLIMBING AND BATTLING ROPES
To climb (everyone should be able to climb a rope), row and occasionally battle with. If you are one of those guys who always feels the need to do conditioning, this is a good thing to do at the end of upper body days.

STEEL OR WOODEN LOG
There are few exercises more fun than a log clean and press. Not to mention that it builds massive size and strength.

REVERSE HYPER
Pretty much the same benefits as the 45-degree back raise; great for training the posterior chain.

KETTLEBELLS
These are nice to have for swings and snatches but would be very low on my list. For presses, rows, shrugs, curls, etc., dumbbells are better.

JUMP ROPE
Everyone should know how to use one of these to a decent level.

FARMER'S WALK HANDLES
The exercise itself is essential but if you have a trap bar or heavy enough dumbbells or kettlebells you don't necessarily need the handles. However, they're always very nice to have.

YOKE
This is a very fun, strength producing, strongman exercise that's nice to have the ability to do a few times per month.

SLEDGEHAMMERS
Swings with the sledgehammer at a big tyre are great for grip and core strength.

STONES
You can't be considered a badass until you start carrying some heavy ass stones around. That's some manly s**t right there.

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OUR HYDRATION TEA IS NATURALLY CAFFEINE FREE. CAFFEINE ACTS AS A DIURETIC, WHICH IS USEFUL FOR OTHER FUNCTIONS BUT ITS ABSENCE FROM THIS BLEND MAKES IT PERFECT FOR HYDRATING THE BODY. USE THROUGHOUT THE DAY OR SPECIFICALLY BEFORE AND AFTER EXERCISE TO QUENCH THIRST AND REFRESH THE BODY.

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GIVEAWAY

WIN

AN AESTHETIC NOGI BUNDLE!

Aesthetic have recently released their nogi range, offering up ranked rashguards and compression tights to their growing list of fans. We have two sets of these awesome rashguards and compression tights to give away, helping you keep stylish in nogi season.

To enter our draw to win one of two sets of Aesthetic nogi gear, all you have to do is answer the following question:

WHICH GRACIE FAMILY MEMBER WAS THE MAIN FOCUS OF THE FAMED DOCUMENTARY *CHOKE*?

A) Rickson Gracie
B) Rodney Gracie
C) Ronda Gracie

Send your answers to bjjstyle@gmail.com with your full name, best delivery address and size information.

Good luck!

Closing date – 5th November 2014. The draw takes place on 6th November 2014 and the winner will be notified by email. One entry per person.

For a full list Aesthetic products visit

WWW.FIGHTAESTHETIC.COM

JIU JITSU STYLE REVIEW CORNER

DO YOU WANT YOUR PRODUCTS REVIEWED?
To have your jiu jitsu gear featured in JJS, send us an email at info@bjjstyle.com

ESTIMA IN ACTION

The rise of online training resources is continuously on the increase, so there's no shortage of choice when it comes to shelling out your hard-earned cash. Multiple world and ADCC champion, Braulio Estima, has finally entered the online training resource market with his hotly anticipated Estima In Action website.

Based on the hugely successful MG In Action, and using the same technology, Braulio's training resource launched with over 500 video tutorials already uploaded into the system. All videos are clear and concise and all content is of a professional standard.

For those of you unfamiliar with the 'In Action' website format, let us run you through a few of the outstanding details. Once you've logged-in, you arrive at the main 'training database' page. From here you are able to refine your searches, filtering between gi or nogi techniques, as well as entering keywords if looking for something specific.

Below the keyword search box there is a 'browse all techniques' section, so you can scroll through menu after menu of categorised positions, such as 'mount' or 'de la Riva'.

The main section of your landing page includes a descending list of the most recently added techniques and training sessions, which is a nice touch if you want to keep tabs on what Braulio is currently teaching at his academy. The general interface has been kept very clean and minimalistic, making it easy to navigate.

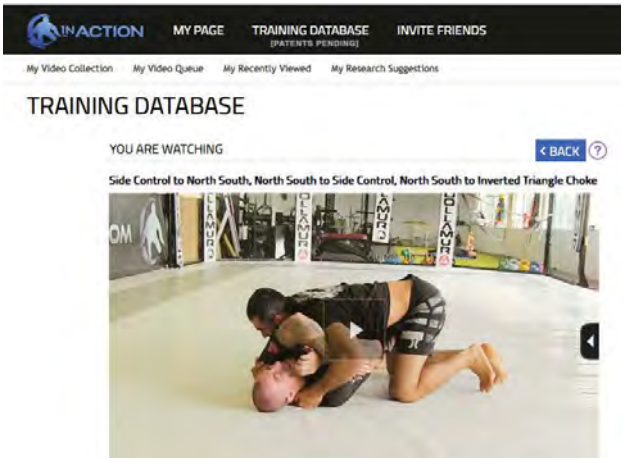
For us, the most notable and appealing aspects of Estima In Action come in to play when watching the videos categorised under 'In Action' or 'Sparring'. Watching an elite level guy like Braulio rolling with his students, as well as guys like Marcelo Garcia, is captivating to say the least.

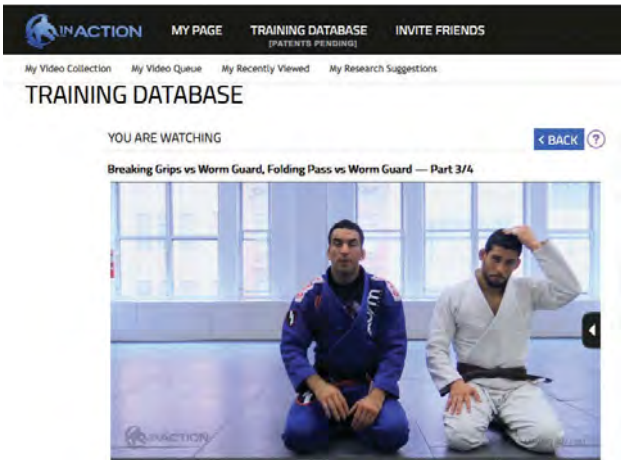
The 'In Action' tab is literally live examples of Braulio pulling-off specific techniques during training. For example, a video could be labelled 'helicopter armlock' and you will then watch Braulio submitting someone with a helicopter armlock from a recent session. On top of that, you will then be ushered towards a video for you to watch if you want to learn the specific technique.

The 'sparring' tab takes things one step further. After watching Braulio rolling for a full round of sparring, you will see a whole host of tags pop up on the right hand side of the page. These tags will literally be a list of techniques that Braulio pulled off in that sparring session, all linking to technique tutorials for you to learn how to master those moves too!

The 'In Action' format is, without doubt, our favourite of all the online teaching resources currently available and we can't recommend it highly enough. For Braulio fans, Estima In Action was always going to be a must, but you can rest assured that the product is state of the art. At $25 a month, it's a fantastic resource.

WWW.ESTIMAINACTION.COM





SCIENCE OF THE CLOSED GUARD WITH DAN LUKEHART

Former school teacher and brown belt under Bruno Paulista, Dan Lukehart, has teamed up with Budo Videos in offering Science of the Closed Guard via the Apple Store.

Having built up much credibility as a jiu jitsu practitioner and teacher via his YouTube channel, we were very excited to get hold of this app. Though Dan is not a black belt world champion, he is an exceptionally articulate instructor, and his ability to convey detail within technique is second to none. With kids these days more focused on berimbolos and 50/50, it's refreshing to see someone focus on teaching the good old-fashioned closed guard. And, let's face it, it's probably a position most of us neglect.

The focus is on the closed guard, more specifically setting up attacks and sweeps once you have established a cross grip. During the 16 technique videos Dan goes into great detail, often addressing small changes to long established positions that will have you re-assessing techniques you'd probably been overlooking for years. From beginners to black belts, there's something in this app for everyone.

Some of our personal favourite sections included Dan's take on working against opponents who stand up in your closed guard and dealing with the dreaded 'staller', where he offers fantastic solutions to very common problems.

As a Budo Videos product, the app platform is extremely stable and professional. The production value is also excellent, with multiple camera angles, timely replays and clear audio.

For those of you who left closed guard behind long ago, or if you are interested in refining one of the most iconic positions in BJJ, this is a great app for you.

AVAILABLE VIA THE APPLE STORE FOR $14.99

YOGA FOR BJJ

Ever since Rickson Gracie was seen practising his stretches and breathing during his famous documentary, *Choke*, yoga and BJJ have had a long-standing association. Rickson Gracie aside, the benefits of practising yoga to help keep your body healthy and up to the strains of rigorous jiu jitsu training are undeniable.

Yoga For BJJ is the brainchild of Sebastian Brosche, a world class BJJ brown belt and yoga expert. Having suffered a serious back injury while training BJJ and judo, Sebastian was forced to take a year away from grappling. It was during this time that he started to practise yoga and reap the benefits it brings for martial arts practitioners.

As a seasoned 'yogi' and jiu jitsu fighter, Sebastian's Yoga For BJJ website offers grapplers a tailored set of yoga principles that will help to keep you on the mats for longer and improve your flexibility.

With over 60 video tutorials (with new techs being posted regularly), there is an extremely comprehensive library of subject matter, including topics such as beginner's yoga and breathing exercises, along with belt stretches and warm ups for BJJ. As well as showcasing a number of yoga flow sequences, Sebastian also outlines stretches and procedures to help overcome lower back pain, warm down properly after class and alleviate neck pain.

The website interface is clear and simple, with all video content housed on the Vimeo platform. Sebastian's teachings are very easy to follow and extremely detailed. Above all, it's fantastic to have someone with such a great grappling pedigree translate the benefits of yoga directly into a jiu jitsu context; he really knows what will help with our training.

Refreshingly, Sebastian is easy to contact direct and even suggests that users should contact him with suggestions and requests for future content. Considering most decent yoga schools will set you back £60-£100 per month, Yoga For BJJ costs just $14 per month (roughly £9) and is a perfect option for grapplers looking to supplement their training and reap the yoga rewards.

WWW.YOGAFORBJJ.NET

Yoga for Rocks - Spine
Yoga for Rocks - Spine
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Name
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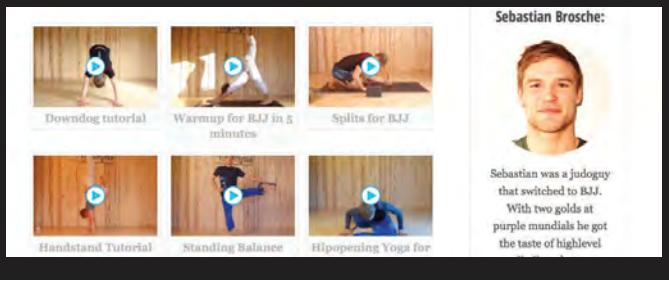
Loosen up your spine of steel! Three effective but super-simple movements that will open things up, even if you are a rock


Downdog tutorial
Warmup for BJJ in 5 minutes
Splits for BJJ
Handstand Tutorial
Standing Balance
Hipopening Yoga for
Sebastian Brosche:
Sebastian was a judoguy that switched to BJJ. With two golds at purple mundials he got the taste of highlevel

KORAL CLASSIC KIMONO

Koral are long-time heavyweights in the kimono world, with countless world champions – past and present – rocking their gear on the podium over the years. The Brazilian company recently re-launched their 'classic' kimono, offering different design details, cut and fit.

Koral is a company born in Brazil and, interestingly, their kimonos are still produced in Brazil as well. The first notable observation has to be the sizing, with the new classic coming in pretty big compared to regular size guidelines. Our 5ft 8in tall reviewer usually rocks an A2, but Koral suggested an A1 based on their sizing. When the gi arrived, it was still a tiny bit big fresh out of the bag. There was minimal shrinkage after several washes, but just enough to get the gi to fit almost perfectly.

The jacket features the trademark Koral branding on both shoulders, but the embroidered logos sit slightly further forward than those of similarly branded kimonos. This is actually a pretty nice touch, as you can read the wording when directly in front of the person wearing the jacket.

Though not considered super light, the product sways closer to the light end of the spectrum than Koral's premium offering, the MKM Competition gi. The sleeves are also notably longer on the new Classic than they are on the MKM Competition offering, which is a good thing, as many thought the MKM sleeves came up a little short. The trousers are of a good length, but not too long, which is often the case for anyone under 5ft 10in.

The two most notable feature of this product are its robustness and attractive price point. After very minimal shrinkage in the wash, you are left with a kimono that is built to last, and coming in at $154 it's a real steal for US customers. European shoppers will have to fork out a little more at €139, but it's still a solid product for the price.

AVAILABLE VIA KORALFIGHT.COM AND KORALEUROPE.EU FOR $154 OR €139

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GI SPOTLIGHT | MANTO VAI FINALIZA

OVERVIEW

Following on from the release of their popular 'Diamond' and 'X' kimonos, Manto's latest offering, "Vai Finaliza", is set to be another fan favourite. The special edition white gi comes with unique red detailing across the jacket and trousers, all wrapped up in the usual Manto quality.

JACKET

The jacket's deep red contrast stitching is very original, with most kimonos on the market coming with either black or blue contrasts. Though there are multiple areas of embroidered branding on the jacket, their size and placement keeps the product looking classy. The main "Vai Finaliza" logo is used on the neck, right arm and lower left section of the jacket, while Vai Finaliza wording is also embroidered along the bottom of the left skirt section.

The jacket was extremely comfortable to roll in, with the material feeling softer than usual even after multiple washes. The sizing was also great, with the sleeves in particular staying a good length and not shrinking up your arms. The cut is pretty standard, perhaps leaning towards the more fitted side of the spectrum, making it a great choice for people of most body types.

TROUSERS

The rip stop cotton trousers continue the contrast theme, with red stitching running along all seams and over the reinforced knee sections. Manto have gone with a standard drawstring rope fastened via four belt loops around the waist. In terms of design, the trousers boast two sections of Manto branding that differ from the jacket, one located on the upper left thigh and the other on the lower right leg.

Our A1L sample saw the trousers sit just off the floor and brushing the base of our 5ft 8in reviewer's heel. However, after around four washes the trousers tightened up a little and sat comfortably around our reviewer's Achilles when standing, so pretty perfect for most grapplers. Generally speaking, we are not huge fans of rip stop trousers, even though they continue to become the norm. However, after review, these trousers were said to feel extra soft and breathable, unlike many rip stop trouser offerings.

DETAILS

For us, the most impressive thing about the Vai Finaliza kimono is its use of unique contrast stitching and placement of logos. The red on white is a very nice touch, but the detail in the areas of branding is extremely well thought out, much like well placed tattoos! As expected of Manto design, all the logos are pretty damn stylish, and the gi manages to come across understated, even though there are seven areas of branding on the whole product.

SUMMARY

The Vai Finaliza is, without doubt, Manto's showpiece kimono. Deviating slightly from their stalwart offerings, this is a fun, special edition product that includes plenty of design points that will no doubt get the gi addict's wallets twitching. Aesthetics aside, we found this to be a top quality Manto offering, with the kimono holding up extremely well under the wear and tear of regular training.

AVAILABLE VIA WWW.MANTOSHOP.EU

FOR €124 OR

WWW.MANTOUSA.COM FOR $174.95

TOURNAMENT REVIEW

WORDS: JON SHOTTER

METAMORIS PRO

WITH METAMORIS 3 HEADLINED BY THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED REMATCH BETWEEN ROYLER GRACIE AND EDDIE BRAVO, THERE WAS KEEN INTEREST AS TO WHO RALEK GRACIE WOULD BRING IN FOR THIS EDITION OF HIS GRAPPLING SUPERFIGHT SHOW.

The two headlining matches saw MMA fighters with solid grappling credentials in Chael Sonnen and Josh Barnett face off against BJJ/No-Gi icons Dean Lister and Andre Galvao. Returning to Metamoris was arguably the best current American gi grappler, Keenan Cornelius, and there were debuts from highly decorated competitors such as Roberto "Comprido" and Saulo Ribeiro and young guns Garry Tonon and Kit Dale.

GARRY TONON VS KIT DALE

Two up and coming talents started off proceedings. Tonon kicked off with a heel hook attempt, forcing Kit to defend. Tonon continued to dictate the pace aggressively.

Garry caught Kit with a snap down guillotine; Kit defended but Tonon repositioned and squeezed and Kit tapped at three minutes. In the post-match interview, Tonon called out Kron Gracie for either Metamoris 5 (to avenge his defeat in their ADCC 2013 match) or an MMA bout.

GARRY TONON SUBMITS KIT DALE WITH A GUILLOTINE

SAULO RIBEIRO VS ROBERTO "COMPRIDO" MEDEIROS

Two titans of BJJ: Saulo, a 5 time Mundial champion and Comprido, a 2 time Mundial Absolute champion, meeting in the night's only gi match.

The match was refreshingly "old school" with both players showing off their judo and some good sweeps. Lots of back and forth and Comprido was attacking Saulo's back as time ran out and the match was declared a draw. It would be great to see more "Masters" gi matches at future events.

SAULO RIBEIRO AND ROBERTO "COMPRIDO" MEDEIROS DRAW

KEENAN CORNELIUS VS VINNY MAGALHAES

Their bout at Metamoris 3 cancelled due to Magalhaes' staph infection, US grappling standout Keenan Cornelius finally faced off against former ADCC champion Vinny Magalhaes.

Keenan sat down to open guard and fought aggressively for a heel hook position which Vinny defended. Vinny then sat back and returned the favour. Leg spaghetti ensued with both men looking for footlocks. Keenan tried an unorthodox back take from 50/50 but Vinny defended and returned to his feet. Vinny tried to pass Keenan's open guard but got caught up in another leg attack.

Vinny was back to his feet and looking to work past Cornelius's open guard but Keenan was very comfortable working from his back and from inverted guard. Lots of movement and intensity from both guys, lots of movement and sweep and leg attacks to entertain the crowd but time ran out for the draw.

KEENAN CORNELIUS AND VINNY MAGALHAES DRAW

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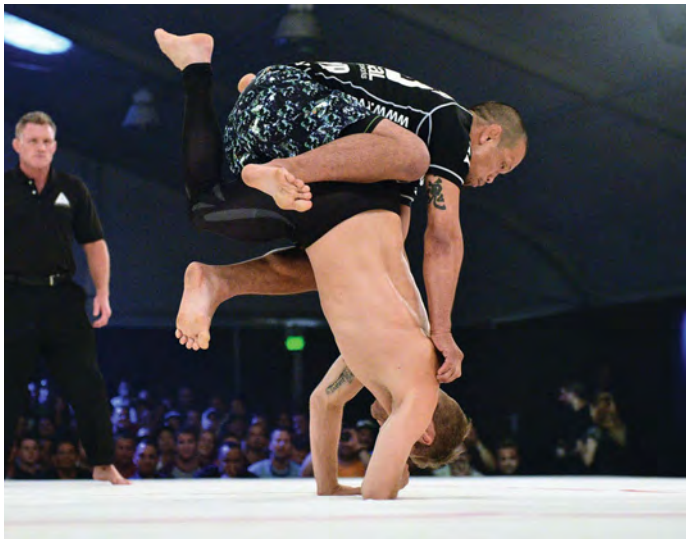
SECRET MATCH: BARET YOSHIDA VS JEFF GLOVER

Metamoris had publicised a secret match with everyone from Ronda Rousey to Gabi Garcia being rumoured to take part. The first competitor was announced as veteran US grappler, Baret Yoshida. His opponent, to the surprise of everyone including his commentary partner Kenny Florian, was Jeff Glover, who stripped down from suit to grappling tights and stepped straight onto the mat.

BARET YOSHIDA AND JEFF GLOVER DRAW

This match had all the usual theatrics, comedy and fast moving submission attempts we expect from these athletes and whilst purists may not have approved of Glover's repeated offering of his back to Yoshida, it made for an enjoyable spectacle, lots of action and fluid motion but ending in a draw.



JOSH BARNETT VS DEAN LISTER

Resplendent in a costume of wrestling boots and black trunks in homage to Antonio Inoki, the well-known MMA fighter and Catch Wrestling exponent faced off against the highly decorated Dean Lister for the Metamoris heavyweight title

JOSH BARNETT SUBMITS DEAN LISTER WITH A NECK CRANK

Both fighters began feeling each other out on their feet before Lister pulled guard and worked for an arm drag as Barnett looked to pass. Barnett used his size and weight advantage very smartly, thwarting much of Lister's offense. After a period of attacking Dean's half guard, Josh finally passed and established side-control for several minutes.

Dean recovered to half and then open guard but Josh forced him to turtle and attacked the back. Barnett managed to roll him back to his side and then attacked from North South, then to side control, then back to defending his back from the turtle. Dean rolled through and tried a sweep that Barnett thwarted.

Lister tried for a leg-lock but Barnett quickly shut it down and got back to side control on Lister. Barnett continued to dictate the flow of the match and as time was running out, moved to a scarf hold and worked a neck crank.

With only ten seconds left Barnett got the tap, the first man to submit Lister in more than 15 years.

Barnett took a little dig at BJJ in the post-match interview: "Jiu jitsu is great but catch wrestling is the real deal!"

ANDRE GALVAO VS CHAEL SONNEN

Sonnen dropped to his knees and shot for a low single leg takedown. Galvao started from open guard but then closed up. Chael had somehow cut his eyebrow but on assessment it wasn't significant.

The match restarted and Galvao worked for an omoplata but Sonnen postured up. Galvao worked from bottom as Sonnen looked to pass and kept actively disengaging from Galvao's open guard attacks.

More back and forth between the two and, after a stand up, Galvao managed to manoeuvre to Sonnen's back. Both hooks in, then a body triangle, and Galvao trying hard to get his forearm under Sonnen's chin. Sonnen went to his belly and Galvao finally locked in the choke for the win.

ANDRE GALVAO SUBMITS CHAEL SONNEN WITH A REAR NAKED CHOKE

RAY STEVENS ACADEMY

Olympic Judo Silver Medalist • Roger Gracie Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Black Belt

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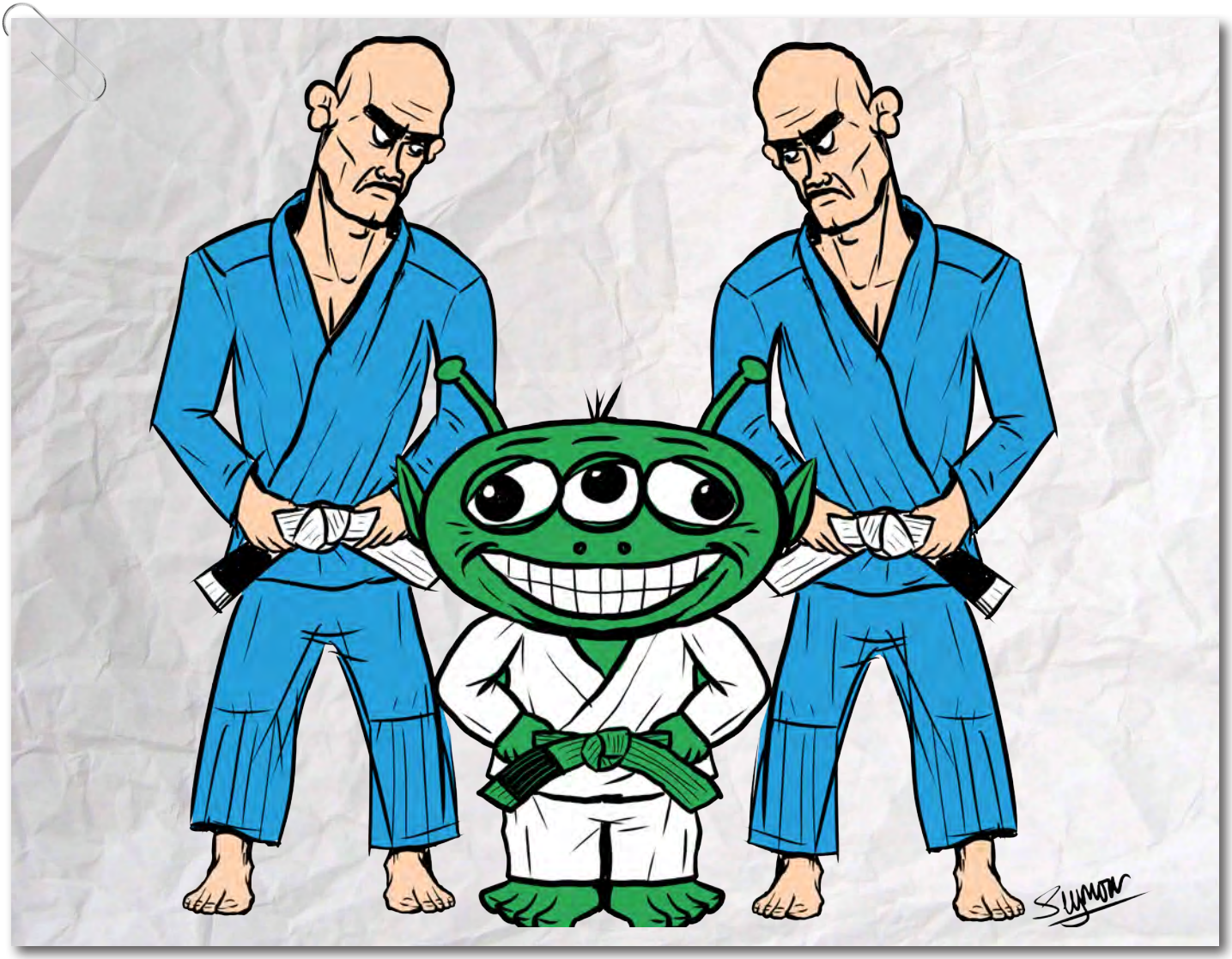
CLASSES - MONDAY/WEDNESDAY/FRIDAY/SATURDAY

PASSING NOTES

A Q&A on the pressing topics in the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu world.



GREEN BELTS IN BRAZILIAN JIU JITSU

Ooh are these eco-friendly rank belts made from the recycled sweat of a thousand white belts?

UMM, NO, IT'S A GREEN COLOURED RANKING BELT.

Ah, I see, well them kids gotta have cute colour belts to keep 'em interested right?

NO, THIS IS FOR ADULTS. I MEAN THEY DO HAVE GREEN BELTS FOR JUNIORS, BUT NOW SOME ACADEMIES ARE INTRODUCING THE GREEN BELT FOR ADULTS TOO.

Oh my Lord! What's wrong with just the current white-blue-purple-brown-black??

IT SEEMS SOME INSTRUCTORS AND STUDENTS FEEL THE GAP BETWEEN WHITE BELT TO BLUE BELT IS TOO LONG AND WANT AN IN-BETWEENY BELT AS A STOP-GAP BETWEEN THE TWO.

That's crazy, so does that mean we have green belt divisions at tournaments now?

NOPE, THEY HAVE TO COMPETE AS WHITE BELTS.

Insane! Sounds like a marketing ploy to me.

WELL YOU SAY THAT, BUT THERE ARE SOME VERY RESPECTED MEMBERS OF THE BJJ ELITE WHO ARE USING THIS SYSTEM, LIKE ROBSON MOURA'S ASSOCIATION AND AMERICAN TOP TEAM. THEY SAY IT ACTUALLY HELPS TO ENSURE CONSISTENCY OF QUALITY AT EACH MAJOR BELT DIVISION.

But isn't that what stripes are for?

THEY HAVE STRIPES TOO.

This is madness! What about in between colour belts after purple and after brown? If you add in all the stripes the grading system would end up looking dangerously close to a McDojo karate school.

HAHAHA, WELL THERE ARE STILL PLENTY OF SCHOOLS WHO OPERATE THE MORE SPARSE SYSTEM OF FIVE COLOUR BELTS WITH NO STRIPES.

DO SAY

The belt only covers two inches of your ass, you have to do the rest.

DON'T SAY

Is there a pink belt?

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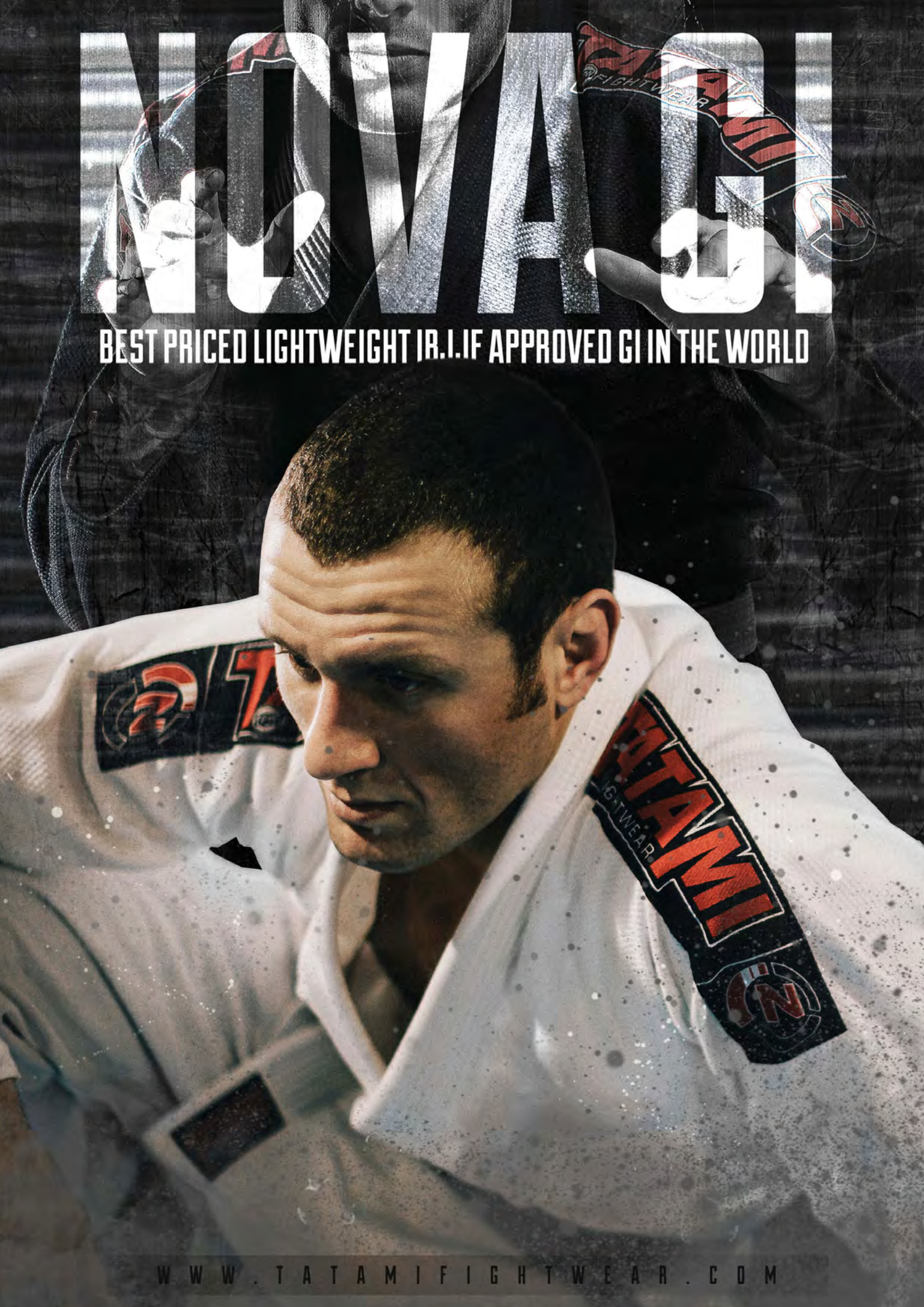
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